



Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Report conducted by Option consommateurs
and
presented to the Industry Canada's Office of Consumer Affairs

June 2010

Option consommateurs

MISSION

Option consommateurs is a not-for-profit association whose mission is to defend the rights and interests of consumers and to ensure that they are respected.

HISTORY

Option consommateurs has been in existence since 1983, when it arose from the *Associations cooperatives d'économie familiale* movement, more specifically, the Montreal ACEF. In 1999 it joined forces with the *Association des consommateurs du Québec* (ACQ), which had already pursued a similar mission for over 50 years

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

Options consommateurs has a team of some 30 employees working in five departments: Budgeting, Energy Efficiency, Legal Affairs, Press Room, and Research and Representation. Over the years, *Option consommateurs* has developed special expertise in the areas of financial services, health, agrifood, energy, travel, access to justice, trade practices, indebtedness, and the protection of privacy. Every year, we reach 7,000-10,000 consumers directly, conduct numerous interviews in the media, participate in working groups, sit on boards of directors, carry out large-scale projects with key partners, and produce research reports, policy papers and buyers' guides, including the annual *Toy Guide* in *Protegez-vous* magazine.

MEMBERSHIP

In its quest to bring about change, *Option consommateurs* is active on many fronts: conducting research, organizing class action suits, and applying pressure on companies and government authorities. You can help us do more for you by becoming a member of *Option consommateurs* at www.option-consommateurs.org.

Acknowledgments

Option consommateurs wishes to thank Industry Canada for the funding received under the Contributions Program for Non-Profit Consumer and Voluntary Organizations. The opinions expressed in this report are not those of Industry Canada or the Government of Canada.

The primary author of this study, François Decary-Gilardeau, wishes specially to thank Geneviève Reed, Elise Theriault, Claire Harvey and Nalini Vaddapali for their invaluable assistance.

The reproduction of this report is permitted, provided that the source is cited. Any reproduction or allusion to its contents for advertising or lucrative purposes is strictly prohibited, however.

Legal Deposit

Bibliothèque nationale du Québec
National Library of Canada

ISBN 978-2-923522-57-9

Option consommateurs

Head Office

2120 Sherbrooke E., suite 604
Montreal (Quebec) H2K 1C3

Tel: 514 598-7288

Fax: 514 598-8511

Email: info@option-consommateurs.org

Website: www.option-consommateurs.org

Ottawa Office

1 Nicholas St., suite 1210

Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 7B7

Tel: 613 244-2111

Fax: 613 244-5777

Executive Summary

Grocery shopping is no simple task: with about 30,000 different products in stock in every medium-sized grocery store, consumers have hundreds of choices to make when it comes time to select the food they consume. Price continues to remain the factor with the greatest influence over consumer choice. For the past forty years, legislation has been in place in the U.S. mandating unit pricing in order to facilitate price comparison by reducing prices to a standard basic unit (e.g. \$0.49/100ml).

$$\text{Price per unit of measure} \Leftrightarrow \frac{\text{Price of article}}{\text{Quantity}}$$

Quebec is the only province in Canada where unit pricing is regulated by law. Everywhere else, it is voluntary. The data collected in this study report clearly confirm the usefulness of this tool for consumers and even its impact on consumer choice at the moment of purchase. We therefore recommend that a mandatory system of unit pricing be established all across Canada. This should be accompanied by educational and communication activities aimed at informing consumers, particularly those who have the most difficulty comparing prices (seniors, young people and allophones).

More specifically, we will issue recommendations about which regulatory provisions need to be emphasized in order to arrive at an effective framework that serves consumers. The aim of these provisions is to standardize labelling while enhancing the readability of labels and ensuring they are easy to understand. These recommendations apply as much to Quebec as to the rest of Canada, and in the short term, should be incorporated within a standard governing the display of unit prices.

In order to arrive at these recommendations, we conducted a three-step process. First, we measured Canadian consumers' understanding, and knowledge of unit pricing and their interest therein by means of a survey. Subsequently, we conducted a comparative legal analysis to identify trends and best practices found in the texts of laws. Finally, we analyzed business practices related to unit pricing in Quebec and Canada and evaluated the quality of the shelf labels of some fifteen different brands.

Our survey highlighted the advantages of unit pricing for consumers. Furthermore, we showed that Canadians who are familiar with this method tended to be those with the best strategies for selecting articles offering the best quantity-price ratio. The comparative legal analysis revealed the wide diversity of legal provisions in effect elsewhere. On the one hand, these provisions are primarily designed to better inform consumers by establishing standards for standardizing and displaying information. On the other, they are pragmatic, and attempt not to unnecessarily increase the burden on retailers, particularly smaller ones. Finally, in the field study, we assessed the quality of unit pricing in various retailers. By quality, we mean the intelligibility and readability of information provided to consumers. Our investigation revealed several weaknesses in both Quebec and Ontario that undermined consumers' ability to compare prices optimally. These weaknesses apply also to the format and design of labels and the way that information is presented on them. Many of these shortcomings could be easily rectified by the retailers themselves.

Table of contents

OPTION CONSOMMATEURS	I
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	II
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	V
LIST OF RECOMMANDATIONS	VII
LIST OF TABLES	IX
LIST OF GRAPHICS	X
LIST OF BOXES	XI
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: ADVANTAGES OF UNIT PRICING	4
THE IMPORTANCE OF A PRICE-COMPARISON TOOL	9
CHAPTER 2: CANADIANS AND UNIT PRICING	11
QUESTIONNAIRE	11
ANALYSIS RESULTS	15
DISCUSSION	23
CHAPTER 3: COMPARISON OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF UNIT PRICING	25
CANADA	25
<i>The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)</i>	26
<i>The Food and Drugs Act (FDA)</i>	27
<i>The Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations</i>	28
QUEBEC	30
EUROPE.....	33
<i>Directive 98/6/EC on consumer protection in the indication of prices of products offered to consumers</i>	34
THE UNITED KINGDOM	38
THE UNITED STATES.....	43
<i>Requirements included in Handbook 130</i>	44
<i>Connecticut</i>	48
<i>Massachusetts</i>	52
AUSTRALIA	56
COMPARATIVE LAW: PROVISIONS AT THE SERVICE OF CONSUMERS.....	61
<i>Application and scope</i>	61
<i>Display</i>	62
<i>Exemptions</i>	66
<i>Discussion of exemptions</i>	72
CHAPTER 4: THE SITUATION IN CANADA	74
FOOD RETAILERS.....	74
READABILITY AND CLARITY OF UNIT PRICING LABELS IN CANADA	75
<i>Graphic characteristics of shelf labels</i>	76
<i>Indication of unit price</i>	79
RESULTS OF UNIT PRICING STUDY ON IN CANADA.....	82
<i>Survey Results by Retail Store</i>	84
<i>Discussion</i>	91
CONCLUSION	93

APPENDIX 1: DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS I
APPENDIX 2: LIST OF RETAIL STORES VISITED DURING THE STUDY XVII

List of recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: Option consommateurs recommends that the federal and provincial governments implement measures to facilitate price comparison by members of vulnerable groups such as young people, seniors and allophones. This would entail unit price labeling being mandatory on all prepackaged foods.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Option consommateurs recommends that in the short term, the federal government adopt guidelines governing unit pricing in order to standardize and maximize its impact.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Option consommateurs recommends that all levels of government, in partnership with food retailers and consumer groups, establish

RECOMMENDATION 4: Option consommateurs recommends that the display of unit pricing be applied to the maximum number of products. Consequently, we recommend limiting possible exemptions to unit pricing policies to the minimum. Option consommateurs believes that such exemptions are exceptional and must be clearly justified.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Option consommateurs recommends that unit pricing be displayed in all types of advertising to consumers that states the sale price of the item.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Option consommateurs recommends that the unit price always be rounded to the nearest cent or one hundredth of a dollar.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Option consommateurs recommends that the basic unit used for unit pricing of similar products be always the same at the same retailer.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Option consommateurs recommends that discounted products should also display unit pricing.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Since it is impossible to compare the price of the product if the unit price is not calculated on the basis of the final quantity obtained by following the instructions on the product, Option consommateurs recommends that the basic quantity used to calculate the unit price be established on the basis of the final reconstituted products (i.e. infant formula).

RECOMMENDATION 10: Option consommateurs recommends that the information for the consumer on the label be more prominent than the information for the merchant.

RECOMMENDATION 11: In order to facilitate the distinction between information intended for the consumer and information intended for the merchant, Option consommateurs recommends that information be laid out on a label in accordance with the graphic alignment principle. In addition, the information for the merchant should all be grouped in a specific section of the label.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Option consommateurs recommends that retailers avoid overloading their labels to the limit. In particular, Option consommateurs urges retailers not to display their logo.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Option consommateurs recommends that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and provincial officials ensure compliance with the *Weights and Measures Act and Regulations* as regards the use of symbols (g, ml, \$, etc.).

RECOMMENDATION 14: Option consommateurs recommends that the *Office de la protection des consommateurs* devote particular attention to ensuring that merchants comply with the *Act* and the *Regulation* respecting the display of unit pricing and take the suitable measures in the event of non-compliance.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Option consommateurs recommends that the *Office de la protection des consommateurs* specify by regulatory means the basic units to be used in displaying unit prices.

RECOMMENDATION 16: Option consommateurs recommends that Quebec's *Consumer Protection Act* be clarified in order to remove any doubt as to the obligation to display the unit price of products on sale.

List of tables

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF UNIT PRICE OF ORANGE JUICE ON SPECIAL AT RETAILERS IN QUEBEC (OCTOBER 2009)	4
TABLE 2: COMPARISON OF UNIT PRICE OF ORANGE JUICE ON SPECIAL AT RETAILERS IN QUEBEC IN FEBRUARY 2010	5
TABLE 3: COMPARISON OF PRICES AT IGA	7
TABLE 4: COMPARISON OF PRICES AT MÉTRO	8
TABLE 5: LEGISLATION ON UNIT PRICE IN QUEBEC	30
TABLE 6: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN QUEBEC	32
TABLE 7: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION ON UNIT PRICING IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY	36
TABLE 8: LEGISLATION RESPECTING UNIT PRICING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM	38
TABLE 9: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM	39
TABLE 10: DETAILS OF SECTIONS OF HANDBOOK 130 RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN THE UNITED STATES	46
TABLE 11: SECTIONS RELATING TO DISPLAY OF UNIT PRICE IN CONNECTICUT	48
TABLE 12: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN CONNECTICUT	49
TABLE 13: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN MASSACHUSETTS	52
TABLE 14: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN MASSACHUSETTS	53
TABLE 15: LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN AUSTRALIA	57
TABLE 16: DETAILS OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO UNIT PRICING IN AUSTRALIA	58
TABLE 17: RESULTS OF LABEL READABILITY AND CLARITY AT MAJOR CANADIAN RETAILERS	83
TABLE 18: RETAILERS' PERFORMANCE BY PROVINCE	92

List of graphics

FIGURE 1: RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING ACCORDING TO AGE (Q1).....	16
FIGURE 2: DECLARED EASE OF COMPARING PRICES BETWEEN TWO SIMILAR PRODUCTS BASED ON AGE (Q4).....	18
FIGURE 3: KNOWLEDGE OF UNIT PRICING BASED ON AGE (Q5).....	19
FIGURE 4: KNOWLEDGE OF UNIT PRICING BASED ON FAMILY INCOME (Q5)	20
FIGURE 5: FREQUENCY OF USE OF UNIT PRICING AMONG PEOPLE WHO NOTICED IT (Q5 AND Q6 COMBINED).....	21
FIGURE 6: STRATEGIES REPORTED FOR GETTING THE BEST VALUE IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND FAMILIARITY WITH UNIT PRICING (Q5 AND Q9).....	22
FIGURE 7: TWO EXAMPLES OF LABELS THAT FOLLOW THE GRAPHIC ALIGNMENT PRINCIPLE (RECTANGULAR AND SQUARE LABELS).....	79

List of boxes

BOX 1: WHAT IS UNIT PRICING?	3
BOX 2: TOO MUCH CONFUSION SURROUNDING TOO MANY FORMATS: CLASSICO PASTA SAUCE.....	6
BOX 3: SURVEY ON THE ATTITUDES OF CANADIANS TOWARDS UNIT PRICING	13
BOX 4: PREAMBLE TO THE DIRECTIVE 98/6/EC (SELECTED ARTICLES).....	35
BOX 5: A FIRST TEST DEMONSTRATING THE NEED FOR UNIT PRICING.....	43
BOX 6: DOES THE UNIT PRICE OF DISCOUNTED FOOD HAVE TO BE DISPLAYED? REPLY OF THE OFFICE DE LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR	71

Introduction

Grocery shopping is no simple task: with about 30,000 different products in stock in a medium-sized grocery, consumers have hundreds of choices to make when it comes time to deciding what food to buy. These choices are influenced by a range of factors from taste to food preferences, health, social or environmental impact considerations, but also and especially, price.

While consumers are able to choose from a growing range of products, making an informed choice about a product based on their own personal criteria can be a somewhat daunting task. Finding a product that offers the most for a given price is not easy. In parallel with the proliferation of available products, we have also witnessed a proliferation of available formats. It is actually not uncommon to be faced with yogurt placed side by side in 650 g or 750 g formats or margarine in both 454 g and 400 g containers. Unless we read the labels carefully, these containers might easily appear to contain an equivalent quantity of product, which is obviously not the case.

In this study, therefore, we decided to focus on the issue of price in relation to the quantity of product sold. Put simply, we assumed that in the majority of cases, consumers want to receive the best value for money. Although we recognize that consumers will be influenced by and interested in other distinguishing features (taste, user-friendly format etc.), we limited our analysis to the simple questions: “How much does this product cost for a specific amount compared to the other product?” and “How much does this product cost for a specific amount if I buy it in this format rather than another? To help answer these questions, we relied on an objective tool for comparing unit pricing. This tool, incidentally, is also displayed in numerous stores, in different forms.

The aim of this study is to arrive at a deeper understanding of the issues involved in unit pricing. We begin with a simulation that will help identify the problem. We then

proceed with an analysis of the survey data to understand the behaviour of Canadians, their knowledge of this tool and how interested they are in it. We follow this up with a comparative legal analysis that highlights the diversity of legal instruments developed by a large number of jurisdictions, including Quebec, with a necessary aside on the absence of regulations respecting unit pricing in Canada. Finally, we describe the current situation of unit pricing in Quebec and Ontario, basing ourselves on a field survey conducted on some forty food retailers. Analysis of the data collected in this report culminated in a list of recommendations to federal and provincial governments, (including Quebec, which is the only jurisdiction in Canada that mentions unit pricing), food retailers, consumer organizations and groups working in the domain of food safety.

Box 1: What is unit pricing?

Unit pricing is a tool designed for consumers that was introduced in the United States in the late 60s. It is primarily aimed at facilitating the comparison of prices of similar products offered in different formats.

From the arithmetical point of view, one needs simply to compare the price of food to a basic unit common to all these foods, whether in grams, milliliters or any other relevant unit.

$$\text{Price per unit of measure} \Leftrightarrow \frac{\text{Price of article}}{\text{Quantity}}$$

For example, if we have a strawberry yogurt weighing 650g that costs \$2.99 and another that weighs 750g and costs \$3.29, which offers you the most for your money? If we reduce the price to a common unit of 100 grams, it is easy to make the comparison.

$$\text{Yogurt A} \Leftrightarrow \frac{2,99\$}{650 \text{ g}} = 0.46 \text{ } \cancel{\$/}_{100 \text{ g}}$$

$$\text{Yogurt B} \Leftrightarrow \frac{3,29\$}{750 \text{ g}} = 0.44 \text{ } \cancel{\$/}_{100 \text{ g}}$$

Thus, in this example, yogurt B is cheaper than yogurt A, even if only by a small difference of \$0.02/100g; about 5% less.

Chapter 1: Advantages of unit pricing

First, we wanted to find out whether the information provided by unit pricing is really useful, whether there is a significant difference between the prices of similar products. To answer this question, we conducted two exercises. The first was to compare the prices and sizes of orange juice on special in the first week of October 2009 and in March 2010. This was carried out based on circulars distributed by major supermarkets. Retailers that did not offer discounts on orange juice were excluded. As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2, there is a considerable discrepancy between the unit prices of orange juice on sale.

Table 1: Comparison of unit price of orange juice on special at retailers in Quebec (October 2009)

Store	IGA	LOBLAWS	MÉTRO	PROVIGO	RICHELIEU	SUPER C	TRADITION
Brand	Oasis	Tropicana	Tropicana	House Brand	House Brand	House Brand	Tropicana
Size (in litres)	1.75 l	2 x 1.89 l	1.89 l	1.89 l	2.84 l	1.89 l	2.63 l
Price	\$2.99	\$6.00	\$2.99	\$2.99	\$4.99	\$2.99	\$4.98
Unit price (in/l)	\$1.71/l	\$1.59/l	\$1.58/l	\$1.58/l	\$1.76/l	\$1.58/l	\$1.89/l

In fact, on the basis of the data in Table 1, we can make several observations. First, the price difference between the two containers of orange juice on special is about 20%. It is also surprising that the larger size of the same brand is more expensive in this example than the smaller 1.75 l or 1.89 l sizes. The report also revealed that house brands are not automatically more inexpensive. That week, Tropicana cost the same as the house brand at Métro or Provigo or Super C.

Table 2: Comparison of unit price of orange juice on special at retailers in Quebec in February 2010

Store	IGA	LOBLAWS	MÉTRO	PROVIGO	RICHELIEU	JARDIN MOBILE	TRADITION
Brand	Oasis	Oasis	Tropicana	Simply Orange	House Brand	Tropicana	House Brand
Size (in litres)	1.75 l	1.75 l	2 x 1.89 l	1.75 l	1.75 l	1.89 l	1.89 l
Price	\$2.49	\$1.99	\$5.00	\$3.49	\$2.99	\$3.99	\$2.99
Unit price (in litres)	\$1.71/l	\$1.14/l	\$1.32/l	\$1.99 /l	\$1.71/l	\$l 2.11/l	\$1.59/l

A few months later, these findings were repeated, except that the differences were even more pronounced. In fact, this time, there was an even greater price difference between Oasis and Tropicana juice (85%).

Overall, in analyzing the information in Tables 1 and 2, several observations can be made. First, it should be noted that food retailers do not include unit pricing in their advertisements or circulars. This is a shame because as we have seen, there are large disparities in prices from one retailer to another.

Second, we noted that there are multiple formats (1.75 l, 1.89 l, 2.63 l and 2.84 l) and certain promotions involved buying two at a time, for a total of 3.78 l (2 x 1.89). In addition, some formats are relatively close to each other, which makes the distinction more difficult (they may even be difficult to differentiate visually), but still involve significant amounts. In fact, there is 9% more juice in the 1.89 format than in the 1.75, which is roughly equivalent to one serving of juice, according to the Canada Food Guide (0.125 l). The same scenario applies for the larger sizes: 8% more in the 2.84 l container than in the 2.63 one¹. These small distinctions are not only difficult

¹ Moreover, we do not see the logic in a 2.63-litre container. If 1.89 l. is equivalent ½ gallon, and 2.84 l. to ¾ gallon, there is no equivalent for 2.63 l. in imperial measurement.

for the consumer to spot, but also the retailer (see box 2 on next page).

Finally and not surprisingly, unit pricing varies greatly from place to place. Better labelling of these prices would improve the information provided to consumers.

Box 2: Too much confusion surrounding too many formats: Classico pasta sauce

In a survey of prices at a Métro retail outlet, we were surprised to find that some products were sold in different, though very similar sizes, barely discernible to the eye. This was the case with Classico pasta sauces. In fact, these sauces are available in different sizes depending on the flavour of the sauce. The “Roasted Portobello Mushroom” and “Tomato Alfredo” sauces come in a 650 ml size, whereas the “Tomato Basil” and “Four Cheeses” flavours are in the slightly larger 700 ml format. The same goes for products such as Alfredo sauce. The “Alfredo Classico” sauce is sold in 410 ml format, and the “Roasted Garlic Alfredo” in 435 ml format.

If consumers find it difficult to disentangle these differences in quantity, they are apparently not the only ones! Our investigation has shown that that Métro used the reference quantity of 650 ml in calculating the unit price of all its Classico tomato sauces. Thus, with a retail price of \$4.19, the sauces had a unit price of \$0.645/100ml for all products, while the sauces available in 700ml format sold for \$0.599/100ml. The same error occurred in the case of Alfredo sauces, for which the basic measure used in making the calculation was 410 ml. It should have read \$0.963/100ml for the Roasted Garlic Sauce and \$1.02/100ml for the Classico Alfredo sauce.

Unfortunately, our survey did not permit us to routinely audit the accuracy of the calculations used by merchants.

The second exercise aimed at demonstrating the usefulness of unit pricing was carried out in two grocery stores in Montreal. We noted the difference between the prices and sizes of a dozen similar commodities in order to check the variation in unit pricing. These surveys were conducted on February 25, 2010.

Table 3: Comparison of prices at IGA

Product	Brand	Format	Price	Price per unit of measure
Original sausage (hot dog)	House Brand	450 g	\$2.19	\$0.49/100g
	Lafleur	450 g	\$2.49	\$0.55/100g
	Hygrade	450 g	\$3.29	\$0.73/100g
	Lester	375 g	\$3.29	\$0.88/100g
Plain Oatmeal (individual packets)	Maison	384 g	\$1.99	\$0.52/100g
	Quaker	430 g	\$3.99	\$0.93/100g
Raspberry Jam	Ed Smith	375 ml	\$3.89	\$1.04/100ml
		500 ml	\$4.49	\$0.90/100ml
	Smucker's	250 ml	\$3.45	\$1.38/100ml
		500 ml	\$4.99	\$1.00/100ml
	Habitant	500 ml	\$3.29	\$0.66/100ml
	House brand	500 ml	\$3.99	\$0.80/100ml
	Kraft	250 ml	\$2.49	\$1.00/100ml
		500 ml	\$4.89	\$0.98/100ml
	Double fruit	375 ml	\$4.99	\$1.33/100ml
	Dora	2 x 500 ml	\$5.00	\$0.50/100ml
Bonne maman	250 ml	\$4.79	\$1.92/100ml	
Natural Spring Water	Montclair	1.5 l	\$0.79	\$0.05/100ml
	Volvic	1.5 l	\$2.89	\$0.19/100ml
	Naya	1.5 l	\$0.99	\$0.07/100ml
	Evian	1 l	\$2.79	\$0.28/100ml
		0.75 l	\$2.99	\$0.40/100ml
	Labrador	4 l	\$1.99	\$0.05/100ml
	Eska	6 x 1.5 l	\$4.79	\$0.05/100ml
	House Brand	4 l	\$1.29	\$0.03/100ml
24 x 0.5 l		\$4.79	\$0.04/100ml	

First of all, it is important to note that the products are obviously not identical. However, we have attempted to compare similar products. As shown, the variation in unit price on the shelves is vast. By far the most spectacular is natural spring water, prices of which ranged from 3¢ to 40¢ per 100ml, for a markup of over 1300%! Raspberry jam also provides a good example of the usefulness of unit pricing. We noted that depending on the format, the price can more than double. For example,

Habitant Capita brand jam costs \$0.66/100ml, while Double Fruit costs \$1.33/100ml. Moreover, we noted that the best price was for Dora jam, at \$0.50/100ml, due to an IGA promotion. However, the retailer in this case did not see fit to indicate the unit price of the product it was promoting, making it difficult to compare.

Table 4: Comparison of prices at Métro

Product	Brand	Format	Price	Price per unit of measure
Mayonnaise	Hellmans	445 ml	\$2.99	\$40.67/100ml
		710 ml	\$4.49	\$0.63/100ml
		890 ml	\$4.99	\$0.56/100ml
	Kraft	475 ml	\$3.39	\$0.71/100ml
		475 ml	\$2.39	\$0.50/100ml
	House Brand	950 ml	\$3.59	\$0.38/100ml
Creamed Corn	Green Giant	3 x 398 ml	\$4.00	\$0.34/100ml
	House Brand	10 x 284 ml	\$4.99	\$0.18/100ml
		398 ml	\$0.99	\$0.25/100ml
	Del Monte	3 x 398 ml	\$4.00	\$0.34/100ml
All-purpose white flour	Robin Hood	1 kg	\$2.59	\$0.26/100g
		2.5 kg	\$5.49	\$0.22/100g
		10 kg	\$14.49	\$0.14/100g
	Five Roses	1 kg	\$2.59	\$0.26/100g
		2.5 kg	\$5.49	\$0.22/100g
		5 kg	\$8.99	\$0.18/100g
		10 kg	\$14.49	\$0.14/100g
	House Brand	1 kg	\$1.99	\$0.20/100g
		2.5 kg	\$2.99	\$0.12/100g
		5 kg	\$6.99	\$0.14/100g
		10 kg	\$11.99	\$0.12/100g
Plain Yogurt	Yoplait	650 g	\$3.79	\$0.58/100g
	Damafro	750 g	\$2.79	\$0.37/100g
	Danone	650 g	\$2.77	\$0.43/100g
	House Brand	2 x 650 g	\$5.00	\$0.38/100g
	Liberte	750 g	\$3.99	\$0.53/100g

Similarly at Métro, there is a great difference between the price and volume of the various products selected. In the case of plain yogurt, it is worth noting that the unit

price of the house brand yogurt is slightly higher than Damafro. Unfortunately, here too, the unit price of the house brand was not indicated on the label, making comparisons difficult. In the case of flour, we noticed that the unit price was counter-intuitive. In fact, it is cheaper to buy two 2.5 kg bags of flour (on special) than one 5 kg bag (at the regular price). In the case of creamed corn, the comparison was more complex, since three of the four products were on sale and therefore did not display the unit price). We can see from the table that the best price per quantity is for ten cans of the house brand for \$4.99. Moreover, calculation of the unit price shows that the other specials on the Green Giant and Del Monte brands actually cost more than the same format of the house brand at the regular price.

The importance of a price-comparison tool

All these examples show the importance of displaying the price per unit of quantity if consumers are to be able to make informed choices in terms of price. With the proliferation of formats and brands, it is increasingly difficult to properly compare the prices of similar products. As we can see, this simple labelling procedure could enhance the purchasing power of Canadians, especially those who are most cost-conscious, such as low-income households. I hardly need remind you that according to Statistics Canada (2003), only 52% of Canadians have level 3 literacy, and 45% are at level 3 in terms of numeracy². In the latter case, this means that the rest of Canadians (55%) have difficulty making simple calculations such as using the three times table, calculating a tip, or comparing the prices of two products offered in different formats. It was, incidentally, because of the difficulty involved in performing this calculation for each food item and in order to help consumers make enlightened choices, that some governments have made unit pricing mandatory.

² According to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada: “Level 3 is usually considered the minimum generally required to function well in society today.” Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Statistics Canada. 2005. “Building on our Competencies: Canadian Results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey, 2003.”

In the current situation, in which many Canadians are struggling to make ends meet at the end of every month, consumers are looking for this type of information, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Canadians and unit pricing

In December 2009, Option consommateurs asked Environics Research to conduct a survey aimed at arriving at a better picture of how well Canadian consumers understand and use unit pricing. We wanted to understand whether consumers generally were equipped to make informed decisions in terms of price; we also wanted to understand the factors influencing their purchasing decisions.

This survey has permitted us to better understand the differences between Canadians, both with regard to their knowledge on a given subject and also their self-reported behaviour. In fact, a survey is “a tool for collecting and modelling information based on the observation of responses to a set of questions given to a sample of the population”³. In our case, the population is the population of Canada, and our sample is made up of 1,001 Canadians from all regions of the country with a variety of socioeconomic profiles. The respondents were a randomly selected group of adults interviewed between December 10 and 16. The percentages are calibrated to ensure that they are representative of the composition of the Canadian population in terms of age, gender, and place of residence. The calibration was performed based on data from the latest census of 2006. The margin of error in such a sample (n = 1001) is $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20⁴.

Questionnaire

The survey we commissioned contained a total of nine questions (see Box 3). First, we wanted to know who we were addressing and to what extent the respondent was responsible for buying groceries within his or her household (Q1). Then we wanted to

³ Blais, Andre et Claire Durand. 2002. *Le sondage*. In “Recherche Sociale – De la problématique à la collecte des données” Benoit Gauthier (dir.) PUQ: Quebec, p.357

⁴ The detailed results of the survey can be found in Appendix I of this report.

know the major factors that played a role when buying food. Indirectly, we wanted to sound out the participants' awareness of the pricing issue (Q2 and Q3). In question 4, we asked Canadians about their perceptions of their ability to compare grocery store prices adequately in the current context (Q4).

Before proceeding to question 5, the people conducting the survey introduced the participants to the concept of unit pricing. We first asked whether participants had ever seen such labels (Q5), then asked them if they used them in their purchasing process (Q6) and if they found them easy to use (Q7). Finally, we asked respondents whether they believed that it would be a good thing to legally require grocers to display the unit price on all foods (Q8). This question was aimed at understanding how consumers behave when they want to find the lowest prices at the grocery store, so we asked them what the most effective means was of obtaining a good quantity-price ratio (Q9).

Box 3: Survey on the attitudes of Canadians towards unit pricing

Q1 How much of a role do you play in buying groceries in your household? Is buying groceries mostly your responsibility, a responsibility you share equally with someone else or are you not usually responsible for buying groceries?

01 - Grocery shopping mostly your responsibility

02 - Grocery shopping is a responsibility that you share equally with someone else

03 - You're not usually responsible for grocery shopping

99 - DK/NA

Q2 Which one of the following is the most important factor when you are choosing which groceries to buy? Is it ...? CHOOSE ONE

01 - Price

02 - Brand name

03 - Quality and taste

04 - Health benefits

05 - Sales and promotions

99 - DK/NA

Q3 When you leave a grocery store, would you say you always, usually, sometimes, rarely or never feel like you got good value for money?

01 - Always

02 - Usually

03 - Sometimes

04 - Rarely

05 - Never

99 - DK/NA

Q4 When you are trying to compare the prices of similar food products in a grocery store, is it usually very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult or very difficult to figure out which is the best deal?

01 - Very Easy

02 - Somewhat easy

03 - Somewhat difficult

04 - Very difficult

99 - DK/NA

Q5 In grocery stores, some packaged or canned products display the “unit price” of the product in addition to the sale price on the label. The “unit price” is the price per unit of measurement, such as the price per 100 millilitres or 100 milligrams. Have you ever noticed the unit price on the label of any groceries you have bought?

- 01 - Yes
- 02 - No
- 99 - DK/NA

Q6 To what extent would you say that you read and make use of the “unit price” on the label when you are deciding what you buy at the grocery store? Do you use always, usually, sometimes, rarely or never use it?

- 01 - Always
- 02 - Usually
- 03 - Sometimes
- 04 - Rarely
- 05 - Never
- 99 - DK/NA

Q7 How clear and easy to find is the unit price on most groceries? Is it very, somewhat, not very or not at all clear and easy to find?

- 01 - Very clear
- 02 - Somewhat clear
- 03 - Not very clear
- 04 - Not at all clear
- 99 - DK/NA

Q8 Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that grocery stores ought to legally be obliged to show the unit price of all foods they sell?

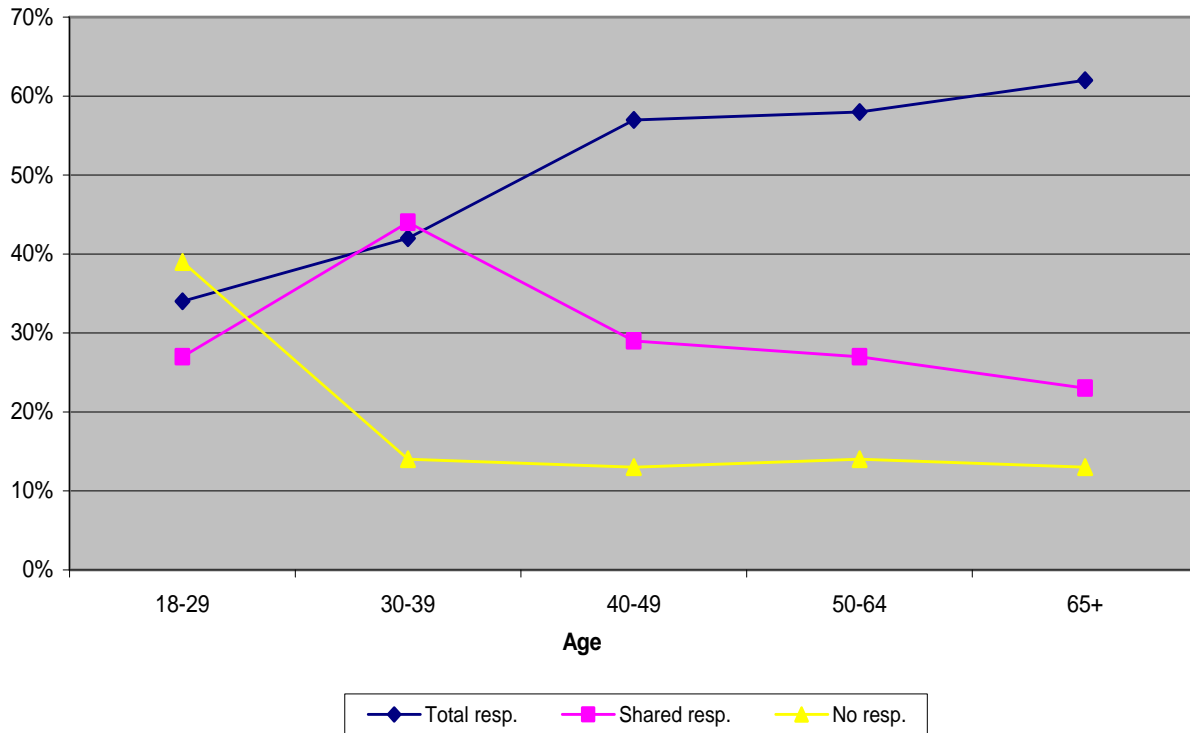
- 01 - Strongly agree
- 02 - Somewhat agree
- 03 - Somewhat disagree
- 04 - Strongly disagree
- 99 - DK/NA

Q9 In your opinion, which of the following is the most effective way to make sure you get the best value for money when you buy your groceries? Is it by ...? CHOOSE ONE

- 01 - Buying products that are on sale
- 02 - Buying cheaper house brands
- 03 - Comparing the unit price of products
- 99 - DK/NA

Analysis results

First of all, our survey showed that only 18% of adult Canadians do not consider themselves at all responsible for making food purchases in their household. The rest either consider grocery shopping to be a shared responsibility (29%) in the home or entirely their responsibility (51%). This is important and will be linked to other variables and other responses to our survey throughout this analysis. It is interesting to note that age is the variable with the greatest impact on responsibility for grocery shopping (see chart 1). Besides age, 71% of women surveyed consider themselves to be primarily responsible for grocery shopping in the household, compared with the low figure of 29% for men.

Figure 1: Responsibility for grocery shopping according to age (Q1)

Among the factors that most influence the choice of a grocery product, it appears that the quality and taste of the product is the factor that most influences the choice of Canadians (37%) followed by health benefits (25%) and price (23%). Discounts and promotions (7%) and brands (4%) come in last with about one in ten Canadians choosing food based on these two criteria. It should be noted that cost consciousness increases dramatically in households with a family income of less than \$25,000 (37%) compared to only 9% in families with incomes higher than \$120,000. In short we can say that less fortunate Canadians are four times as likely to base their choice on the criterion of food price as more affluent Canadians.

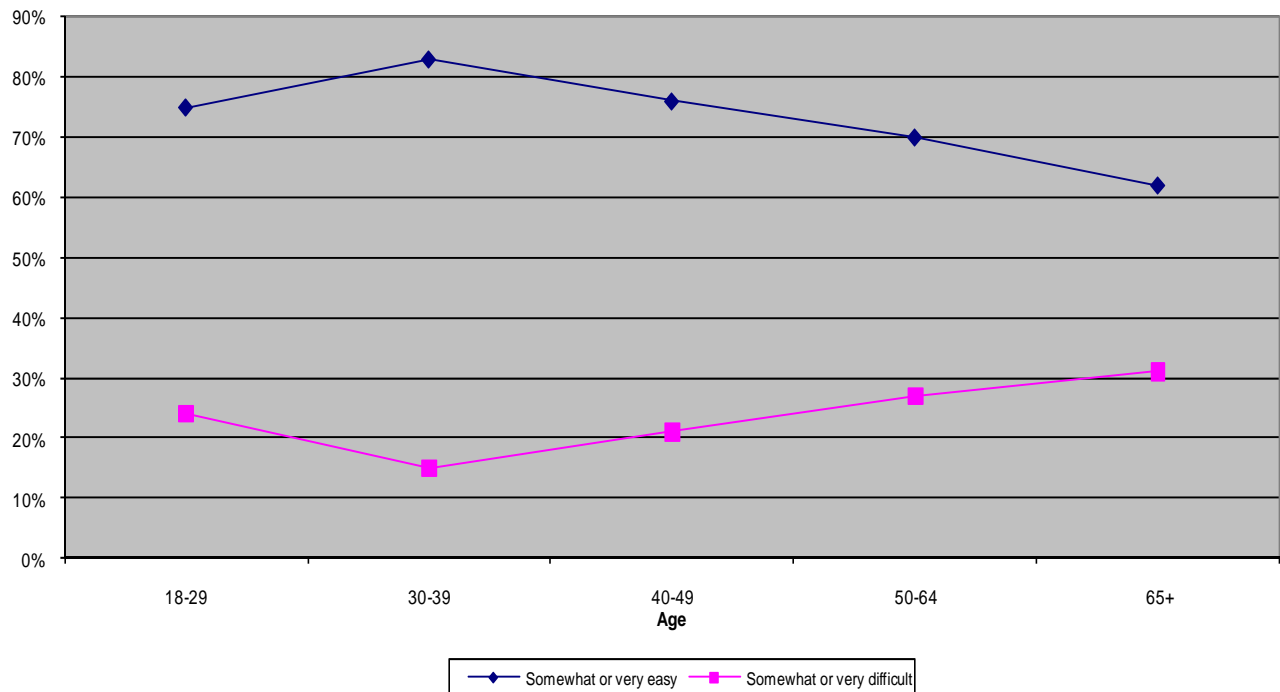
As a rule, the majority of Canadians say they always (15%) or usually (40%) get value for money when they buy their groceries. However, no fewer than 29% of respondents are only sometimes satisfied with what they in return for their dollars, while 8% and

3% say they rarely or never get their money's worth. These data are relatively stable in terms of household income and other socioeconomic variables.

As for the price comparison between two similar products in grocery stores, a significant number of Canadians find this a difficult operation. While an average of 24% of Canadians find it somewhat or very difficult to compare prices, these results are significantly higher among the elderly, as can be clearly seen in figure 2. This reveals a higher degree of vulnerability and greater confusion with regard to prices in this segment of the population. In numerical terms, if we apply the results of our survey to the entire population, there would be 460,000 Canadians over 65 who find it very difficult to compare the prices of similar products. In addition, Canadians whose mother tongue is neither French nor English find it more difficult to compare prices, 33% of these find it somewhat or very difficult, which is comparable to the figures for Canadians over 65. Action needs to be taken to alleviate the confusion among these citizens, particularly in terms of display and education (see Recommendation 1).

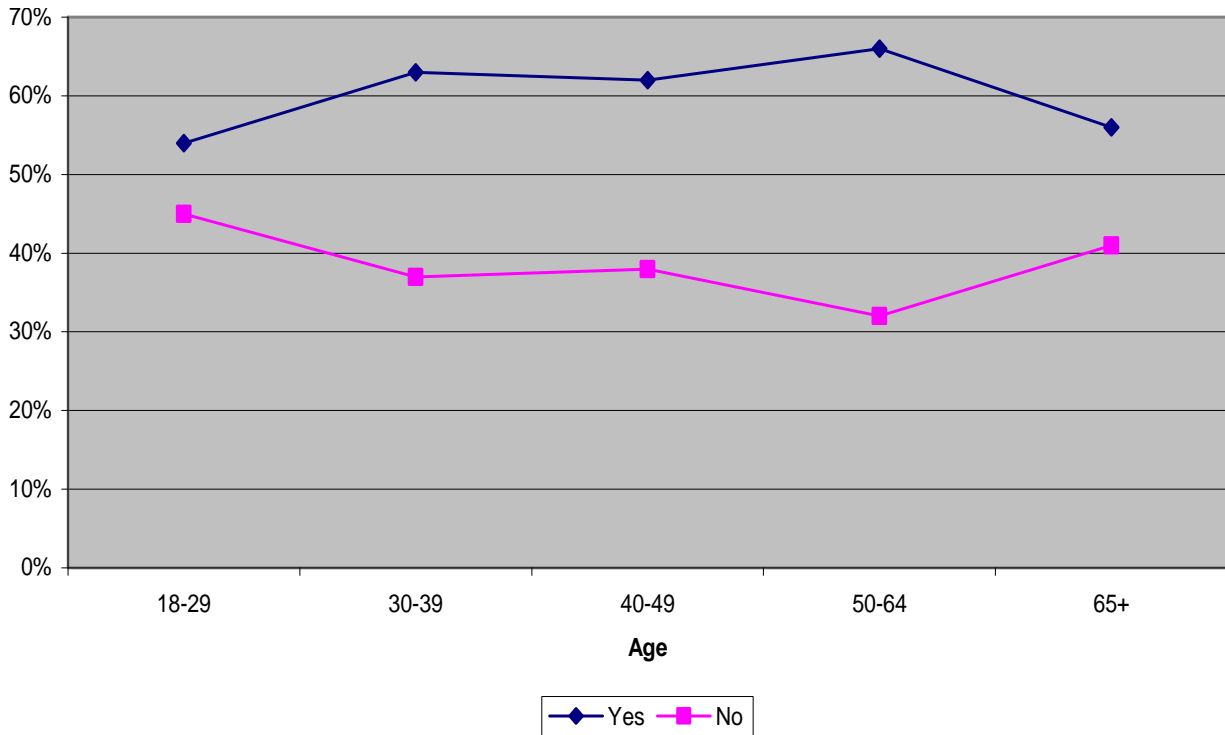
The detailed results of survey question 4 reveal significant disparities from one region to another. For example, in Montreal and Toronto respectively, 17% and 19% of Canadians find it somewhat or very difficult to compare the prices of two similar products; this figure is double in the City of Vancouver (up to 34%). The disparity is troubling and deserves further exploration in a future study⁵.

⁵ Caution: because the sample size reduces as we target specific populations, the level of precision is lower. Such differences remain statistically significant nevertheless.

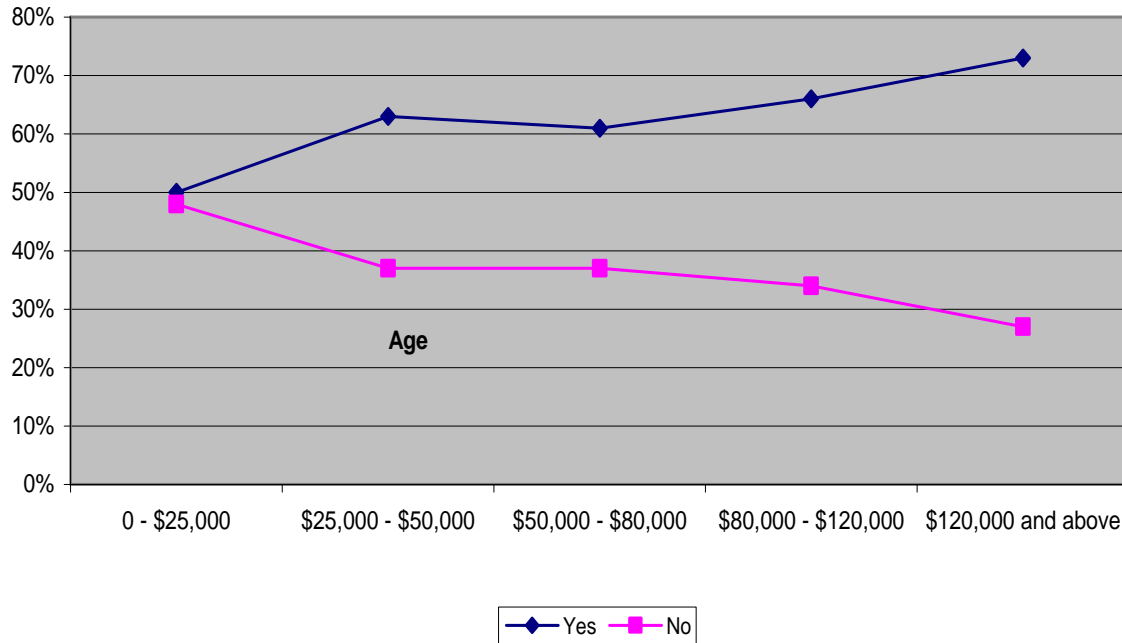
Figure 2: Declared ease of comparing prices between two similar products based on age (Q4)

While the preceding questions were designed to gain a better understanding of Canadian consumers' purchasing behaviour, the following questions were focused on unit pricing. In question 5, it is interesting to note that about 6 in 10 Canadians have already noticed this type of label in a store. Not surprisingly, those who were not responsible for grocery shopping noticed the tool markedly less (one in two people had already noticed it). Similar to the result obtained in question 4, knowledge of unit pricing is mostly a factor of the respondents' age. As can be seen in Figure 3, this difference is less pronounced than for that related to difficulty in comparing prices but follows the same trend, as older and younger Canadians are less aware of this tool for facilitating price comparison.

Figure 3: Knowledge of unit pricing based on age (Q5)



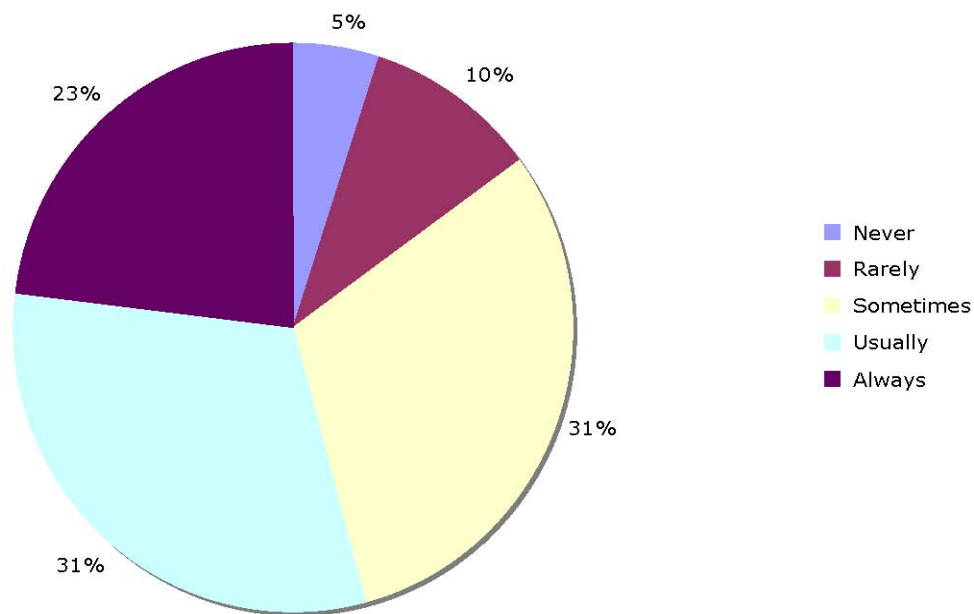
The relationship between knowledge of this tool and household income is another noticeable trend in level of knowledge about unit pricing. We have identified an almost direct correlation between income and level of knowledge, as shown in Figure 4. These two figures indicate that some populations have lower levels of understanding about unit price, which also coincides with the levels of literacy and numeracy in the Statistics Canada survey. These people would more likely benefit from an education campaign on unit pricing.

Figure 4: Knowledge of unit pricing based on family income (Q5)

As for the use of unit pricing in purchasing decisions, a high proportion of those who have noticed this type of labelling always or usually (23% and 31%) use it. As can be seen in Figure 5, when consumers have access to unit pricing and understand it, they use it extensively. Indeed, only one in twenty stated that they had never consulted unit pricing, which demonstrates the great popularity of this tool, once assimilated.

Note that for questions 6, 8 and 9, we used the SPSS software to cross-reference our data. Thus, only respondents who answered yes to question 5 are used. The differences obtained are significant. For example, one person in twenty who answered yes to question 5 says she/he never uses the unit price, while this number goes up to one in five if we retain the whole population. In such cases, the margin of error increases to 4.0%, 19 times out of 20.

Figure 5: Frequency of use of unit pricing among people who noticed it (Q5 and Q6 combined)



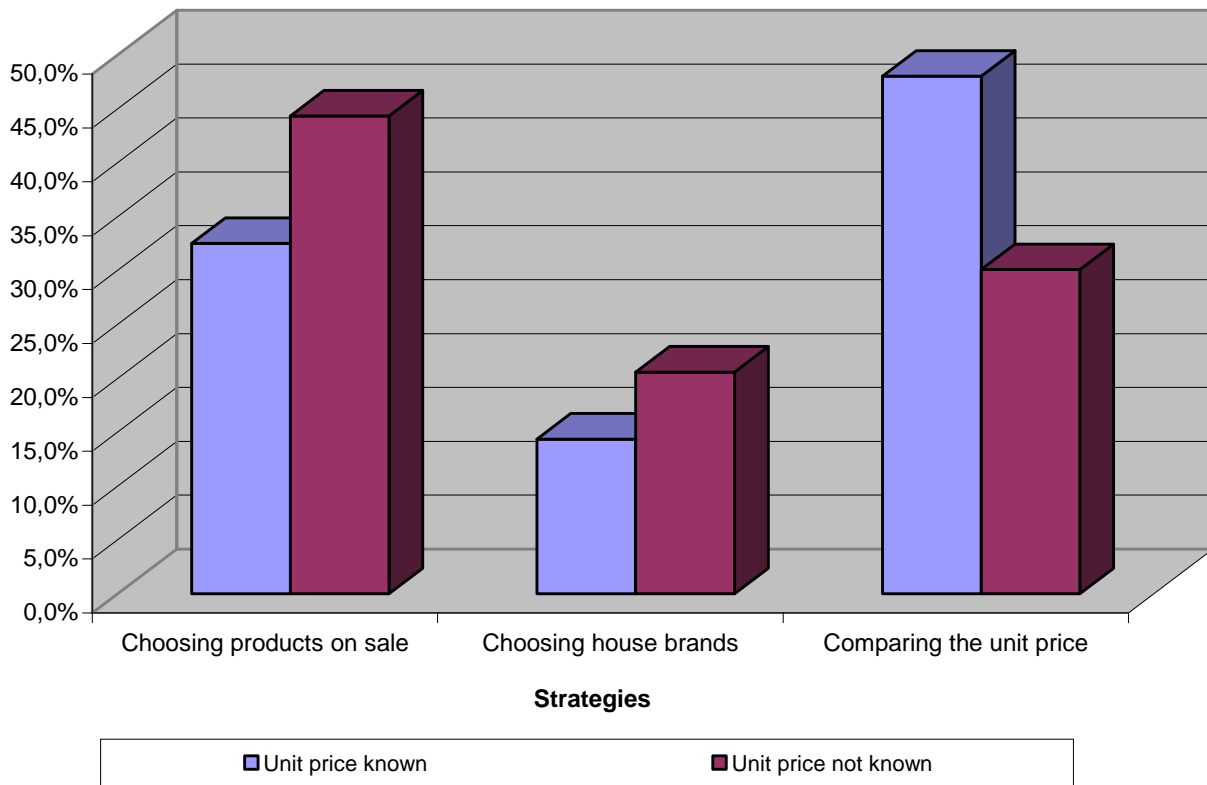
In this context it is important to note that about one in four found the unit pricing information very or somewhat unclear. Our survey does not indicate the reason for this ambiguity, but shows clearly that this information seems not to be understood by everyone and it is not perceived as being very clearly presented. Only 22% of respondents said that the unit price labelling on most items was very clear, which involves a great deal of ambiguity.

It is presumably due to the lack of clarity in unit pricing today that a vast majority of Canadians surveyed want the government to make it mandatory. In total, over 8 out of 10 respondents supported the idea of making unit pricing mandatory on all foods, while only 10% were opposed.

Finally, it is interesting to note that depending on their knowledge or otherwise of unit pricing, Canadian consumers said they were in favour of various strategies to promote healthy food choices. The majority of those who were not familiar with unit

pricing tended to choose products on sale to get a better price in terms of quantity, while those familiar with this tool based their choice mainly on the better unit price. This distinction in terms of consumer behaviour is striking on account of the great difference between the two categories of consumers: those who are familiar with unit pricing and those who are not (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Strategies reported for getting the best value in terms of quantity and familiarity with unit pricing (Q5 and Q9)



Discussion

The results of this survey permit a better understanding of Canadian consumers with regard to their behaviour and their ability to compare food prices. These findings raise some important consumer issues, especially in terms of public policy, and call for recommendations on how to facilitate consumer choice by providing clear information with relation to pricing.

First, the survey helped validate the assumption that the lower the incomes of Canadians, the more they are likely to be influenced by commodity prices. However, this cost consciousness does not translate into a greater use, or even a better understanding, of unit-of-measure food pricing. Notwithstanding, this tool is specifically designed to facilitate comparison of similar products on the basis of price. These Canadians could benefit greatly from this type of labelling by reducing grocery costs and saving precious dollars.

It really is a tool worth knowing about! We clearly saw in Figure 6 that knowledge of unit pricing had a significant impact on how consumers make their choices. It encourages them to move from uncertain data (ads for specific discounts or house brands known to be more affordable) to rigorous quantitative data (unit pricing). Consumers would benefit from relying on such data and governments would promote meaningful competition and price transparency by informing and educating them about the existence of this tool.

Moreover, as we pointed out earlier, younger and older consumers reported having difficulty comparing prices in stores. This might be attributable to less experience in shopping among 18- to 29-year-olds, but does not explain the incomprehension expressed by those 65 and over. Similarly, allophones and low income Canadians have a harder time than others comparing prices. In such cases, unit price labelling could

make the task easier, since it is clear and easy to understand (see Chapter 4).

While certain types of consumers have more difficulty comparing prices, they are generally less aware of the existence of the unit pricing tool. Once again, it is seniors, young people and those with lower incomes are less likely to know about this type of labelling than the rest of Canadians.

Also, it is remarkable how little knowledge Canadians demonstrated of unit pricing. This was shown by question 5, which was aimed simply at finding out whether Canadians knew about this type of information that was displayed at certain retailers. We can still make some assumptions to explain why nearly four in ten Canadian consumers did not know about this tool. First, the measure is voluntary in Canada and is regulated only in Quebec. This state of affairs leaves it up to retailers whether or not to display unit pricing and how to do so. Second, as pointed out by the companies we interviewed, none have launched a campaign or made an effort to explain unit pricing to their customers, even when they claimed to display unit prices consistently. In addition, our literature search on education on unit pricing did not turn up a single campaign of this type in Canada, either by consumer associations, by companies or by government agencies.

Finally, our comparative analysis of labels displaying the unit price in Quebec and Ontario (see Chapter 4) enabled us to note that: 1) there was inconsistency in the ways of displaying the information; 2) the readability and comprehensibility of the labels sometimes left something to be desired. Nevertheless, the tool remains very popular and has a positive impact on consumer behaviour, as can be seen in Figure 5, even though for many, the information was difficult to find.

Chapter 3: Comparison of the legal framework of unit pricing

In order to make it easier to compare prices, many countries have decided to regulate or mandate unit pricing. The pioneers in this area are the cities and states of the North-eastern United States, which were the first to implement such systems in the late 60s. Since then, many laws on unit pricing have been implemented worldwide. Consequently, we are now faced with a rich and varied legal corpus on this subject.

In this chapter, we conducted an exercise in comparative law aimed at highlighting the peculiarities of a number of laws from around the world and identifying best practices. We begin by describing the regulatory framework in Canada. We next describe the provisions of the laws on unit pricing in Quebec, the United States, Europe and Australia. Then, we systematically analyze the laws or regulations of these States in order finally to make a number of recommendations.

Canada

In Canada, the federal food labelling standards apply to all provinces and territories. Every province maintains the right to regulate commerce carried out on its territory. Accordingly, food labelling is a jurisdiction shared between the federal and provincial governments.

At the federal level, there are three agencies responsible for labelling foods: the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Health Canada, and the Competition Bureau⁶. Health Canada's involvement, including that of the Food Directorate, is limited to ensuring nutritious, safe and healthy food. Health Canada is not mandated to regulate or manage the commercial aspects of food marketing. This task falls to the CFIA and the Competition Bureau.

⁶ Note that the Competition Bureau is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*, but the Office delegates its inspection powers to the CFIA for all foods.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

The Agency is dedicated to “safeguarding food, animals and plants, which enhances the health and well-being of Canada's people, environment and economy.”⁷ Thus, “in carrying out its mandate, and in support of Government of Canada priorities, the CFIA strives to:

- protect Canadians from preventable health risks
- protect consumers through a fair and effective food, animal and plant regulatory regime that supports competitive domestic and international markets.⁸”

This is reflected in three initiatives by the government agency:

Helping consumers make healthy food choices

By enforcing Canada's fair packaging and labelling laws - checking labels for accuracy in product identity, contents, weight, purity and grade, as well as nutritional labelling and health claims - the *CFIA* verifies that the information provided to consumers is truthful and not misleading, enabling them to make healthy food choices.

Maintaining an effective regulatory framework

In order to maintain a competitive marketplace and provide consumers with a wide selection of affordable and high quality products, it is critical that the regulatory regime be both fair and effective. The *CFIA* is committed to maintaining an effective, transparent, rules- and science-based domestic regulatory framework. On an ongoing basis, the Agency develops and updates acts and regulations. The *CFIA* also leads or participates in a number of domestic and international agreements and arrangements.

⁷ Canadian Food Inspection Agency 2006. “Science and regulation... working together for Canadians” [on line] <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/agen/broch/broche.shtml> (Page visited February 10, 2010).

⁸ Idem.

Protecting consumers and the market from unfair trade practices

To deter deceptive and unfair market practices, the *CFIA* enforces standards for food labelling, verifies compliance with the Seeds Act, and grants plant breeders' rights.⁹

It is the *CFIA* that has the responsibility of protecting consumers in the food domain. The Agency is also responsible for implementing legislation and regulations on packaging and labelling of consumer products in accordance with the *Food and Drugs Act and Regulations*.

These laws and regulations prescribe standards for the quality, quantity, composition, packaging, labelling and advertising of foods. However, there is no provision under the jurisdiction of the Canadian government respecting unit pricing. Existing provisions regarding labelling and the prohibition of false representation or confusion regarding quantity could be widened to include this measure.

The Food and Drugs Act (FDA)

It is up to the *CFIA* to oversee the effective application of the *FDA*. The *Act* contains a general provision that prohibits false or misleading statements.

Fraud

*5. (1) No person shall label, package, treat, process, sell or advertise any food in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive or is likely to create an erroneous impression regarding its character, value, quantity, composition, merit or safety.*¹⁰

⁹ *Idem.*

¹⁰ Government of Canada, *Food and Drug Act*.

The Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations

The CFIA also monitors compliance with the provisions contained in *The Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations*

These are the sections of the law that concern us:

Prohibition respecting labels

4. (1) No dealer shall sell, import into Canada or advertise any prepackaged product unless that product has applied to it a label containing a declaration of net quantity of the product in the form and manner required by this Act or prescribed and in terms of either

(a) numerical count, or

(b) a unit of measurement set out in Schedule I to the Weights and Measures Act,

as may be prescribed.

Representations relating to prepackaged products

7. (1) No dealer shall apply to any prepackaged product or sell, import into Canada or advertise any prepackaged product that has applied to it a label containing any false or misleading representation that relates to or may reasonably be regarded as relating to that product.

Definition of «false or misleading representation»

(2) For the purposes of this section, «false or misleading representation» includes

(a) any representation in which expressions, words, figures, depictions or symbols are used, arranged or shown in a manner that may reasonably be regarded as qualifying the declared net quantity of a prepackaged

product or as likely to deceive a consumer with respect to the net quantity of a prepackaged product;

Quebec

Quebec is the only province that has regulations on displaying the unit price of packaged goods; retailers in other provinces do so only on a voluntary basis.

Officially, the Quebec regulation on unit pricing came into force on June 23, 2001 after negotiations that lasted for about three years. In 1998, Quebec's *Office de la protection du consommateur* set up a task force on Section 223, which requires the merchant to post a price on each item offered in his establishment. On the one hand, certain retailers wanted new exemptions from this obligation so that they could minimize operating costs by using optical scanner technology. On the other hand, consumers were skeptical; they feared, among other things, errors due to incorrect posting, prices not displayed, in short, a deterioration in their ability to make informed choices. A compromise was reached in this regard enabling retailers to be exempt from the requirement to display the prices on each product, provided that they complied with the *Price Accuracy Policy* and display the unit price of each product.

The items relating to displaying unit prices in Quebec are therefore to be found in the *Consumer Protection Act* and *Regulation*.

Table 5: Legislation on unit price in Quebec

<i>Consumer Protection Act</i>
Section 223: Indication of sale price
<i>Regulation respecting the application of the Consumer Protection Act</i>
Division III - Indication of Prices Sections 91.4 and 91.5

Thus, retailers have the opportunity to avoid displaying unit prices, if they comply with Articles 91.4 and 91.5. These are the sections that identify requirements with

regard to unit pricing. They are intended only for retailers with a MAPAQ permit issued under the *Regulation Respecting Food*.

Table 6: Details of legislation relating to unit pricing in Quebec

General Criteria	Specific Criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Application/ Scope		S. 223	A merchant must indicate the sale price clearly and legibly on all the goods or, if the goods are wrapped, on the wrapping of all the goods offered for sale in his establishment, subject to the regulations.	CPA
		91.4	Section 223 of the Act does not apply to merchants who use the universal product code optical scanning technology in their establishments, where the following conditions are met: [...]	CPA Regulation
		91.5	A label containing the following information shall be affixed to each item of goods for which a merchant uses the exemption under section 91.4 c) for food sold in an establishment for which the merchant must hold a permit issued under the Regulation respecting food (c. P-29, r. 1), the price per unit of measurement in addition to the price of the item.	
Definition			No definition	
Exemption	Price indicated on the merchandise	S. 223	A merchant must indicate the sale price clearly and legibly on all the goods or, if the goods are wrapped, on the wrapping of all the goods offered for sale in his establishment, subject to the regulations	CPA
	Type of business	91.5	c) for food sold in an establishment for which the merchant must hold a permit issued under the Regulation respecting food (c. P-29, r. 1), the price per unit of measurement in addition to the price of the item.	CPA Regulation
Display	Label characteristics	91.5	In all cases, the price on the label must be in at least 28-point bold type print and the other information in at least 10-point type print.	CPA Regulation
			Where the item is sold on a shelf, the label prescribed under the first paragraph shall be affixed next to the product on the shelf and measure at least: (a) 112,90 square centimetres in establishments for which the merchant is required to hold a permit under the Regulation respecting food ; and	CPA Regulation
			(b) 19,67 square centimetres in other establishments.	

Europe

In the late seventies, an acute need for harmonization of regulations was felt among the member States of the European Community with regards to labelling.

Consequently, the European Community implemented *Directive 79/581/EEC on Consumer Protection in the Indication of Prices of Foodstuffs*. The creation of the European Union and the single market has only heightened the need for harmonization.

The fundamental objectives of *Directive 79/581/EEC* were:

- to ensure consumers access to all necessary factual information.
- to protect consumers from misleading information.

The Community rules established the obligation for all foodstuffs sold to European consumers to be accompanied by a label including information on a number of characteristics of the foodstuff in question (including the name of the product, ingredients, expiry date , etc.).¹¹

The European system is often cited as an example of displaying prices by unit of measure, for example, Australia, which has just implemented a law to this effect, quoted *Directive 98/6/EC* extensively with regard to displaying unit pricing.

¹¹ Council Directive 79/112/EEC of December 18, 1978 on the harmonization of laws of member states regarding the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs for the final consumer (OJ L 33 February 8, 1979), as amended by Commission Directive 91/72/EEC of January 16, 1991, which amended Directive 79/112/EEC on the Designation of flavourings in the list of ingredients on the labels of foodstuffs (OJ L 42 February 15 1991). Information found at: <http://sos-net.eu.org/conso/guide2/etiquet.htm>

Directive 98/6/EC on consumer protection in the indication of prices of products offered to consumers

A directive is a legislative act binding the decisions of the European Community Member States. Article 288 of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union* stipulates that: “A directive shall be binding, as to the result to be achieved, upon each Member State to which it is addressed, but shall leave to the national authorities the choice of form and methods¹².”

Member States had until March 18, 2000 to comply with *Directive 98*; the date on which *Directive 79/581/EEC on Consumer Protection in the Indication of the Prices of Foodstuffs* was rescinded¹³.

In addition to the fourteen articles contained in its mandatory section, the Directive is preceded by a lengthy preamble that also incorporates fourteen considerations that were taken into account and integrated within the articles (see Box 4). As in the case of Quebec, we have detailed the various provisions of the Directive in Table 7.

¹² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0001:01:FR:HTML>

¹³ In addition to Directive 79/581/EEC, Directive 88/314/EEC on consumer protection in the indication of prices of non-food products was rescinded on March 18, 2008.

Box 4: Preamble to the Directive 98/6/EC (selected articles)

(1) Whereas transparent operation of the market and correct information is of benefit to consumer protection and healthy competition between enterprises and products;

(2) Whereas consumers must be guaranteed a high level of protection; whereas the Community should contribute thereto by specific action which supports and supplements the policy pursued by the Member States regarding precise, transparent and unambiguous information for consumers on the prices of products offered to them; [...]

(5) Whereas the link between indication of the unit price of products and their pre-packaging in preestablished quantities or capacities corresponding to the values of the ranges adopted at Community level has proved overly complex to apply; whereas it is thus necessary to abandon this link in favour of a new simplified mechanism and in the interest of the consumer, without prejudice to the rules governing packaging standardisation;

(6) Whereas the obligation to indicate the selling price and the unit price contributes substantially to improving consumer information, as this is the easiest way to enable consumers to evaluate and compare the price of products in an optimum manner and hence to make informed choices on the basis of simple comparisons; [...]

(9) Whereas the obligation to indicate the unit price may entail an excessive burden for certain small retail businesses under certain circumstances; whereas Member States should therefore be allowed to refrain from applying this obligation during an appropriate transitional period; [...]

(12) Whereas Community-level rules can ensure homogenous and transparent information that will benefit all consumers in the context of the internal market; whereas the new, simplified approach is both necessary and sufficient to achieve this objective;

(13) Whereas Member States must make sure that the system is effective; whereas the transparency of the system should also be maintained when the euro is introduced; whereas, to that end, the maximum number of prices to be indicated should be limited;

(14) Whereas particular attention should be paid to small retail businesses;

Table 7: Details of legislation on unit pricing in the European Community

General Criteria	Specific Criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Application/Scope		Article 1	The purpose of this Directive is to stipulate indication of the selling price and the price per unit of measurement of products offered by traders to consumers in order to improve consumer information and to facilitate comparison of prices.	Directive 98/6/CE
		Article 3 (1)	The selling price and the unit price shall be indicated for all products referred to in Article 1, the indication of the unit price being subject to the provisions of Article 5. The unit price need not be indicated if it is identical to the sales price.	
		Article 5 (2)	With a view to implementing paragraph 1, Member States may, in the case of non-food products, establish a list of the products or product categories to which the obligation to indicate the unit price shall remain applicable.	
Definitions		Article 2a	“(a) selling price shall mean the final price for a unit of the product, or a given quantity of the product, including VAT and all other taxes;	Directive 98/6/CE
		Article 2b	unit price shall mean the final price, including VAT and all other taxes, for one kilogramme, one litre, one metre, one square metre or one cubic metre of the product or a different single unit of quantity which is widely and customarily used in the Member State concerned in the marketing of specific products	
		Article 2c	products sold in bulk shall mean products which are not pre-packaged and are measured in the presence of the consumer;	
Exemption	Bulk Products	Article 3 (3)	For products sold in bulk, only the unit price must be indicated	Directive 98/6/CE
	Identical Price	Article 3 (1)	The unit price need not be indicated if it is identical to the sales price.	
	Exempted Products	Article 3 (2)	2. Member States may decide not to apply paragraph 1 to: - products supplied in the course of the provision of a service, - sales by auction and sales of works of art and antiques.	
	Confusion	Article 5 (1)	Member States may waive the obligation to indicate the unit price of products for which such indication would not be useful because of the products' nature or purpose or would be liable to create confusion.	
	Type of business	Article 6	If the obligation to indicate the unit price were to constitute an excessive burden for certain small retail businesses because of the number of products on sale, the sales area, the nature of the place of sale, specific conditions of sale where the product is not directly accessible for the consumer or certain forms of business, such as certain types of itinerant trade, Member States may, for a transitional period following the date referred to in Article 11 (1), provide that the obligation to indicate the unit price of products other than those sold in bulk, which are sold in the said businesses, shall not apply, subject to Article 12.	

General Criteria	Specific Criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Indication	Clarity	Article 4 (1)	The selling price and the unit price must be unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible. Member States may provide that the maximum number of prices to be indicated be limited.	Directive 98/6/CE
	Advertisements or printed	Article 3 (4)	Any advertisement which mentions the selling price of products referred to in Article 1 shall also indicate the unit price subject to Article 5.	
	Base unit	Article 4 (2)	The unit price shall refer to a quantity declared in accordance with national and Community provisions.	
			Where national or Community provisions require the indication of the net weight and the net drained weight for certain pre-packed products, it shall be sufficient to indicate the unit price of the net drained weight.	

The United Kingdom

In 1974, the United Kingdom adopted the *Prices Act*, which confers on the Secretary of State the power to make provisions regarding “the ways prices are marked and indicated.” This power set the stage for the implementation of *Directive 98/6/EC* in the United Kingdom.

The new law came into force on July 22, 2004. It replaced the *Price Marking Order 1999*, which was created to comply with the 1998 directive. The 2004 law is still in effect today, and it is therefore this law that will be analyzed in Table 9.

Table 8: Legislation respecting unit pricing in the United Kingdom

Law: Price Marking Order 2004
1. Citation, commencement and interpretation
2. Revocation
3. Scope of application of the Order
4. Obligation to indicate selling price
5. Obligation to indicate unit price
6. to 8. Manner of indication
9. Special provisions relating to general reductions
10. Special provisions relating to precious metals
11. Change in Value-Added Tax etc.
12. and 13. Decimal places and rounding of unit prices
14. Units of Quantity
15. Enforcement
Schedule 1: Relevant Units of quantity for specified products for the purpose of the definition of “Unit Price”
Schedule 2: Products in respect of which a trader is exempt from the requirement to unit price

Table 9: Details of legislation relating to unit pricing in the United Kingdom

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Details	Document
Application /scope		Article 4 (1)	Subject to paragraph (2) and articles 9 and 10, where a trader indicates that any product is or may be for sale to a consumer, he shall indicate the selling price of that product in accordance with the provisions of this Order.	PMO 2004
		Article 5 (1)	Subject to paragraph (2), (3) and (4) and article 9, where a trader indicates that any product is or may be for sale to a consumer, he shall indicate the unit price of that product in accordance with the provisions of this Order.	
		Article 5 (2)	(2) The requirement in paragraph (1) only applies in respect of products sold from bulk or required by or under Parts IV or V of the Weights and Measures Act 1985[6] to be: (a) marked with an indication of quantity; or (b) made up in a quantity prescribed by or under that Act.	
Definitions		Article 1 (2)	“advertisement” means any form of advertisement which is made in order to promote the sale of a product but does not include any advertisement by means of which the trader intends to encourage a consumer to enter into a distance contract, a catalogue, a price list, a container or a label;	PMO 2004
			“net drained weight” means the weight of a solid food product when it is presented in a liquid medium;	
			“products sold from bulk” means products which are not pre-packaged and are weighed or measured at the request of the consumer;	
			“relevant floor area” in relation to a shop means the internal floor area of the shop excluding any area not used for the retail sale of products or for the display of such products for retail sale;	
			“selling price” means the final price for a unit of a product, or a given quantity of a product, including VAT and all other taxes;	
			“shop” includes a store, kiosk and a franchise or concession within a shop;	
			“small shop” means any shop which has a “relevant floor area” not exceeding 280 square metres;	
			“unit price” means the final price, including VAT and all other taxes, for one kilogram, one litre, one metre, one square metre or one cubic metre of a product, except (i) in respect of the products specified in Schedule 1, where unit price means the final price including VAT and all other taxes for the corresponding units of quantity set out in that Schedule; and (ii) in respect of products sold by number, where unit price means the final price including VAT and all other taxes for an individual item of the product.	

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Details	Document
Display	Currency	Article 6 (1)	The indication of selling price and unit price shall be in sterling.	PMO 2004
		Article 6 (2)	If a trader indicates his willingness to accept foreign currency in payment for a product, he shall, in addition to the required price indications in sterling: (a) give an indication of the selling price and any unit price required for the product in the foreign currency in question together with any commission to be charged; or (b) clearly identify the conversion rate on the basis of which the foreign currency price will be calculated together with any commission to be charged; and indicate that such selling price, unit price or conversion rate as the case may be does not apply to transactions via a payment card to be applied to accounts denominated in currencies other than sterling, the conversion rate for which will be that applied by the relevant payment scheme which processes the transaction.	
	Clarity	Article 7 (1)	An indication of selling price, unit price, commission, conversion rate or a change in the rate or coverage of value added tax given in accordance with article 11 shall be - (a) unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible; (b) subject to paragraph 2, given in proximity to: (i) the product; or (ii) in the case of distance contracts and advertisements, a visual or written description of the product; and (c) so placed as to be available to consumers without the need for them to seek assistance from the trader or someone on his behalf in order to ascertain it.	
	Metric or imperial system	Article 4 (4 et 5)	(4) Where, in addition to a unit price, a price per quantity is indicated in relation to a supplementary indication of quantity the unit price shall predominate and the price per supplementary indication of quantity shall be expressed in characters no larger than the unit price. (5) In paragraph (4) "supplementary indication of quantity" refers to an indication of quantity expressed in a unit of measure other than a metric unit as authorised by section 8(5A) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985	
Discounts	Article 9	Where a trader proposes to sell products to which this Order applies at less than the selling price or the unit price previously applicable and indicated in accordance with article 7(1), he may comply with the obligations specified in articles 4(1) (to indicate the selling price) and 5(1) (to indicate the unit price) by indicating by a general notice or any other visible means that the products are or may be for sale at a reduction, provided that the details of the reduction are prominently displayed, unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible.		

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Details	Document
Display (cont'd)	Advertising or publicity	Article 5 (4)	The requirement in paragraph (1) applies in relation to an advertisement for a product only where the selling price of the product is indicated in the advertisement.	PMO 2004
	Rounding of unit prices	Article 12	Where the unit price of a product falls below £1 it shall be expressed to the nearest 0.1p. Where the figure denoting one hundredths of one penny in the unit price is 5 or higher, it shall be rounded up and where it is 4 or lower it shall be rounded down.	
		Article 13	Where the unit price of a product falls above £1 it may be expressed to the nearest: (a) 1p, in which case where the figure denoting tenths of one penny in the unit price is 5 or higher, it shall be rounded up and where it is 4 or lower it shall be rounded down; or (b) 0.1p, in which case where the figure denoting one hundredths of one penny in the unit price is 5 or higher it shall be rounded up and where it is 4 or lower it shall be rounded down.	
	Basic unit	Article 14	For the purposes of Schedule 1 ¹ , the figure denoting the relevant units of quantity in the second column of the table for the corresponding product in the first column of the table refers, as indicated by or under the Weights and Measures Act 1985[8], and unless specified otherwise to: (a) grams where the product is sold by weight; (b) millilitres where the product is sold by volume; and (c) either grams or millilitres, as indicated by the manufacturer of the product, where the product is permitted to be sold by either weight or volume.	
		Article 8	In the case of a pre-packaged solid food product presented in a liquid medium, the unit price shall refer to the net drained weight of the product. Where a unit price is also given with reference to the net weight of the product, it shall be clearly indicated which unit price relates to net drained weight and which to net weight.	
<p>Note 1:: Relevant Units of quantity for specified products (Schedule 1)</p> <p>10 Flavouring essences, Food colourings, Herbs, Make-up Products*, Seeds other than pea, bean, grass and wild bird seeds, Spices Biscuits and shortbread*, Bread*, Breakfast cereal products*, Chocolate confectionery and sugar confectionery, Coffee, Cooked or ready-to-eat fish, seafoods and crustacea, Cooked or ready-to-eat meat including game and poultry, Cosmetic products other than make-up products, Cream and non-dairy alternatives to cream, Dips and spreads excluding edible fats, Dry sauce mixes,</p> <p>100 Fresh processed salad, Fruit juices, soft drinks, Handrolling and pipe tobacco, Ice cream and frozen desserts, Lubricating oils other than oils for internal combustion engines, Pickles, Pies*, pasties*, sausage rolls*, puddings and flans indicating net quantity*, Potato crisps and similar products commonly known as snack foods, Preserves including honey, Ready to eat desserts, Sauces, edible oils, Soups, Tea and other beverages prepared with liquid, Waters, including spa waters and aerated waters</p> <p>75 cl Wines, sparkling wine, liqueur wine, fortified wine</p> <p>50 kg Coal, where sold by the kilogram</p> <p>1,000 kg Ballast, where sold by the kilogram</p> <p>* Except for these products sold by the unit</p>				

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Details	Document
Exemptions	General exemption	Article 5 (3)	The requirement in paragraph (1) shall not apply in relation to: (a) any product which falls within Schedule 2; (b) any product the unit price of which is identical to its selling price; (c) bread made up in a prescribed quantity which is or may be for sale in a small shop, by an itinerant trader or from a vending machine; or (d) any product which is pre-packaged in a constant quantity which is or may be for sale in a small shop, by an itinerant trader or from a vending machine.	PMO 2004
	Advertising	Schedule 2 (1)	Any product which is offered by traders to consumers by means of an advertisement which is: (a) purely aural; (b) broadcast on television; (c) shown at a cinema; or (d) inside a small shop.	
	Packages containing assorted products	Schedule 2 (3)	Any product which comprises an assortment of different items sold in a single package.	
	Liquidation	Schedule 2 (2)	Any product the price of which has been reduced from the usual price at which it is sold, on account of: (a) its damaged condition; or (b) the danger of its deterioration.	
	Exempted products	Schedule 2 (4)	Any product the unit price of which is 0.0p as a result of article 12 (Decimal places and rounding of unit prices) of this Order.	

The United States

It was in the late 60s that the first demands were made for the establishment of a unit pricing system in the United States. These demands were made by the consumer movement and defended by researchers and politicians. The high rate of inflation that prevailed at that time helped build a broader spectrum of supporters and no doubt accelerated the implementation of laws and regulations¹⁴. Even then, government studies were suggesting that unit pricing could reduce grocery costs significantly (see Box 5).

Box 5: A first test demonstrating the need for unit pricing

On September 1, 1970, the Governor of Massachusetts, His Excellency Francis W. Sargent signed legislation implementing a law obliging certain businesses to display unit pricing. By 1972, this innovation on behalf of consumers had spread to neighboring states such as Connecticut and Rhode Island, as well as Maryland and New York City; in addition, a score of states were studying draft unit price legislation¹⁵.

At that time, the idea behind these bills was to allow consumers to make an informed choice when making purchases through a simple comparison of prices. The central government, the states and even cities were concerned about the proliferation of different types and formats of packaging for similar products. In 1969, Commissioner Bess Myerson Grant of New York City's Consumer Affairs Department conducted an investigation to determine whether the information on prices in grocery stores was appropriate and understandable. He chose 26 women responsible for grocery shopping, all with a university degree, and asked them to purchase a list of products using the sole criterion of quantity/price ratio. As it turned out, they made a bad choice in about 44% of purchases.

¹⁴ Miyazaki, Anthony D. *et al.* 2000. "Unit Prices on Retail Shelf Labels: An Assessment of Information Prominence" *Journal of Retailing*, Vol 76 (1), p. 94.

¹⁵ Monroe, Kent B. and Peter J. LaPlaca. 1972. "What are the Benefits of Unit Pricing?" *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 36 (3). p.16.

Contrary to what we saw in Europe with the adoption of *Directive 98/6/EC*, which proposed a uniform approach to all Member States, implementation of regulations respecting display of unit prices in the U.S. has been done primarily through regional governments (cities and states). Consequently, it has developed a greater diversity of approaches with no common basis.

In response to these heterogeneous unit pricing initiatives¹⁶, the National Conference on Weights and Measures published in *NIST Code Handbook 130: Uniform Law and Regulation* (hereinafter *Handbook 130*) a chapter entitled *Uniform Unit Pricing Regulation*. *Handbook 130* does not frame the law, but is rather a model to be used by legislators in drafting their own legislation or regulations.

Today, twenty states and two territories have laws or regulations on unit pricing. Of these, eleven require mandatory display: Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont and the Virgin Islands¹⁷.

In addition to *Handbook 130*, we analyzed the laws of Connecticut and Massachusetts. These states were recommended by Ian Jarratt (Australian unit pricing expert) as being representative of a variety of approaches.

Requirements included in Handbook 130

As we have seen, the purpose of the *Uniform Unit Pricing Regulation* of *Handbook 130* is to provide “a national approach to the subject for those jurisdictions choosing to

¹⁶ National Conference on Weights and Measures. 2009. *NIST Handbook 130: Uniform law and Regulation* [on line] http://ts.nist.gov/WeightsAndMeasures/Publications/upload/12_IVC_UnitPricReg_09_H130_Final.pdf (consulted March 3, 2010).

¹⁷ National Conference on Weights and Measures. No date. *A Guide to U.S. Retail Pricing Laws and Regulations* [on line] http://ts.nist.gov/WeightsAndMeasures/pricinglaws_guide.cfm (Consulted March 3, 2010).

adopt such a regulation”¹⁸. The idea behind it is to standardize the various regulations in order to simplify the task of assuring uniformity among states.

In its current form, *Handbook 130* is a voluntary approach for the use of retailers who wish to adopt unit pricing. In states that have adopted *Handbook 130*, merchants are not obliged to display unit prices, but if they do so, they must comply with the requirements set forth in the model. This is the case in Montana, for example. Note that the model included in *Handbook 130* is not intended to be too onerous or binding, on the contrary. “The NCWM [National Conference on Weights and Measures] does not want to include any requirement that may discourage retailers from voluntarily providing unit price information”¹⁹.

¹⁸ National Conference on Weights and Measures. 2009. *NIST Handbook 130: Uniform law and Regulation* [on line] http://ts.nist.gov/WeightsAndMeasures/Publications/upload/12_IVC_UnitPricReg_09_H130_Final.pdf (Consulted March 3, 2010).

¹⁹ Idem.

Table 10: Details of sections of Handbook 130 relating to unit pricing in the United States

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Application/ scope		Section 1	any retail establishment providing unit price information for packaged commodities shall provide the unit price information in the manner prescribed herein	Handbook 130
Definition		Section 2	<p>The declaration of the unit price of a particular commodity in all package sizes offered for sale in a retail establishment shall be uniformly and consistently expressed in terms of:</p> <p>Price per kilogram or 100 g, or price per pound or ounce, if the net quantity of contents of the commodity is in terms of weight.</p> <p>Price per liter or 100 mL, or price per gallon, quart, pint, or fluid ounce, if the net quantity of contents of the commodity is in terms of liquid volume.</p> <p>Price per individual unit or multiple units if the net quantity of contents of the commodity is in terms of count.</p> <p>Price per square meter, square decimeter, or square centimeter, or price per square yard, square foot, or square inch, if the net quantity of contents of the commodity is in terms of area.</p>	Handbook 130
Exemption	Packages containing assorted products	Section 3	Variety and combination packages [...] shall be exempt from these provisions.	Handbook 130
	Small format	Section 3	Small Packages. – Commodities shall be exempt from these provisions when packaged in quantities of less than 28 g (1 oz) or 29 mL (1 fl oz)	
	Single choice	Section 3	Commodities shall be exempt from these provisions when only one brand in only one size is offered for sale in a particular retail establishment	
	Exempted products	Section 3	When the total retail price is 50 cents or less	
Display	Infant formula	Section 3	For “infant formula,” unit price information may be based on the reconstituted volume.	Handbook 130
	Information on the label	Section 5	<p>[...] The following information shall be provided:</p> <p>(1) the identity and the brand name of the commodity;</p> <p>(2) the quantity of the packaged commodity if more than one package size per brand is displayed;</p> <p>(3) the total retail sales price; and</p> <p>(4) the price per appropriate unit, in accordance with Section 2. Terms for Unit Pricing.</p>	

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Display (cont'd)	Characteristics of the label	Section 5	(a) information may be displayed by means of a sign that offers the unit price for one or more brands and/or sizes of a given commodity, by means of a sticker, stamp, sign, label, or tag affixed to the shelf upon which the commodity is displayed, or by means of a sticker, stamp, sign, label, or tag affixed to the consumer commodity.	Handbook 130
	Clarity	Section 5	[...] Sign shall be displayed clearly and in a non-deceptive manner in a central location as close as practical to all items to which the sign refers.	
	Rounding of unit prices	Section 4	(a) The unit price shall be to the nearest cent when a dollar or more.	
			(b) If the unit price is under a dollar, it shall be listed: (1) to the tenth of a cent, or (2) to the whole cent.	
	Uniformity	Section 6	(a) If different brands or package sizes of the same consumer commodity are expressed in more than one unit of measure (e.g., soft drinks are offered for sale in 2 l bottles and 12 fl oz cans), the retail establishment shall unit price the items consistently.	
			(b) When metric units appear on the consumer commodity in addition to other units of measure, the retail establishment may include both units of measure on any stamps, tags, labels, signs, or lists.	

Connecticut

Connecticut was a pioneer when, in 1971, it passed a law requiring unit pricing. It is one of eleven states that have legislation in place mandating this type of pricing. Note that the Connecticut law is not based on the model of *Handbook 130*.

The law governing unit pricing is found in Volume 7, under heading 2.1a, entitled “The Consumer Protection Code of Laws of Connecticut.” The most relevant parts are in Chapter 417, “General Provisions. Pure Foods and Drugs,” more specifically, Sections 21a - 21a 73 - 77 inclusive, which relate to unit pricing.

Table 11: Sections relating to display of unit price in Connecticut	
Law	Regulation
Sec. 21a - 73 Unit pricing: Definitions.	Sec. 21a - 75-1 Definitions
Sec. 21a - 74 Seller to disclose unit and total price of consumer commodity	Sec. 21a - 75-2 Persons to whom regulations apply
Sec. 21a - 75 Regulations. Hearings. Civil penalties for noncompliance	Sec. 21a - 75-3 Exempt products
Sec. 21a - 76 Exceptions	Sec. 21a - 75-4 Method of disclosure
Sec. 21a - 77 Criminal penalty	Sec. 21a - 75-5 Price per measure
	Sec. 21a - 75-6 Products regulated
	Sec. 21a - 75-7 Extension of time for compliance
	Sec. 21a - 75-8 Responsibility for compliance

Table 12: Details of legislation relating to unit pricing in Connecticut

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Application/ scope		Sec. 21a - 74	Any person who sells or offers or exposes for sale at retail any consumer commodity designated by the commissioner, in accordance with the provisions of section 21a-75, shall disclose to the consumer the unit and total price of such commodity as provided in subsection	Connecticut Code
Definition		Sec. 21a - 73	“Unit price” of a consumer commodity means the retail price of a consumer commodity expressed in terms of the retail price of such commodity per such unit of weight, measure or count, computed to the nearest whole cent or fraction thereof	Connecticut Code
		Sec. 21a - 73	“Consumer commodity” means any food, drug, device, cosmetic or other article, product, or commodity of any other kind or class, which is customarily produced for sale to retail sales agencies or instrumentalities for consumption by individuals, or use by individuals for purposes of personal care or in the performance of services ordinarily rendered in or around the household, and which usually is consumed or expended in the course of such consumption or use	Connecticut Code
Exemption	Prescription drug	Sec. 21a - 73	Except drugs sold only by prescription.	Connecticut Code
	Type of business	Sec. 21a - 76	The provisions of sections 21a-73 to 21a-77, inclusive, shall not apply to any owner-operated single retail store	Connecticut Code
		Sec. 21a - 76	The provisions of sections 21a-73 to 21a-77, inclusive, shall not apply to [...] any store occupying a total retail sales area of not more than three thousand five hundred square feet.	Connecticut Code
	Exempted products	Sec. 21a - 75-3*	(a) Beverages subjected to or complying with packaging or labelling requirements imposed under the Federal Alcohol Administration Act.	Connecticut Regulation
			(b) Products which are required to be marked individually with the cost per unit weight under the provisions of Section 42-115l of the Connecticut General Statutes.	
			(c) Such consumer commodities which are sold in units of even pounds, pints, quarts or gallons, and which have a retail price plainly marked thereon; but only the particular consumer commodities sold in such units shall be exempt.	
	(e) Products sold in one size limit only.			
Packages with assorted products	Sec. 21a - 75-3*	(d) Different products co-mingled in one receptacle or package for the purpose of a one-price sale.		
Small format	Sec. 21a - 75-3*	(f) Snack foods such as cakes, candies, or chips, sold in packages under five ounces in weight.		

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Display	Characteristics of the label	Sec. 21a - 74	<p>Persons subject to the requirements [...] shall disclose the unit price and total price to consumers by one or more of the following means:</p> <p>(1) By attachment of a stamp, tag or label directly adjacent to the consumer commodity, on the shelf on which the commodity is displayed, or by stamping or affixing the price information on each unit of a consumer commodity; or</p> <p>(2) if the consumer commodity is so located that it is not conspicuously visible to the consumer, or is so located that the price information if displayed in accordance with subdivision (1) would not be conspicuously visible to the consumer, by a sign or list bearing such price information, conspicuously placed near the point of procurement; or</p> <p>(3) by such other means as the commissioner may by regulation provide.</p>	Connecticut Code
	Advertising or publicity	Sec. 21a - 74	Any printed advertisement to aid, promote or assist, directly or indirectly, in the sale of any consumer commodity [...], which printed advertisement compares or otherwise displays different sizes or measures of the same such commodity, shall not state the total price of such commodity unless such advertisement also states the unit price of such commodity.	
	Information on the label	Sec. 21a - 75-4*	<p>The tag, label or electronic device shall contain the following three elements:</p> <p>(i) The words "Unit Price" shall appear as a heading, with the unit price always appearing above, or to the left of, the then-selling price;</p> <p>(ii) The price per measure expressed in terms of dollars or cents as applicable, carried to three digits. If the price is over \$1.00, it is to be expressed to the nearest full cents, provided that the said price is rounded off from .005 and over to the next higher cents; and if .004 or less cent, it be carried to three digits. Examples: "25.3 per pound; \$1.67 per quart"; and</p> <p>(iii) The applicable unit of weight or measure or count.</p>	Connecticut Regulation
	Characteristics of the label	Sec. 21a - 75-4*	All retail establishments subject to these regulations shall disclose the price per measure to the consumer by the attachment of a tag or label of any of the following colors on the item itself, or on the shelf or at any other point of sale immediately below the item, or above the item, so as to be conspicuously visible to the consumer. The permissible colors for such tag or label are red, blue, green, orange, yellow, or brown.	Connecticut Regulation
	Rounding of unit prices	Sec. 21a - 75-4*	The price per measure expressed in terms of dollars or cents as applicable, carried to three digits. If the price is over \$1.00, it is to be expressed to the nearest full cents	Connecticut Regulation

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Display (cont'd)	Electronic label	Sec. 21a - 75-4*	<p>An electronic shelf labelling system which uses electronic devices to only display the unit price information required by subsections (b), (c), and (d) of this section may be utilized with the approval of the commissioner.</p> <p>A retailer may disclose the price per measure to the consumer by means of an electronic device [...] which must be placed on the shelf or at any other point of sale immediately below the item, or above the item, so as to be conspicuously visible to the consumer. Such electronic device shall utilize blue color for the retail price and orange color for the unit price.</p>	Connecticut Regulation
	Uniformity	Sec. 21a - 75-5*	There are several products on this list which may be unit priced by different units of measure, provided that the same unit of measure is used for the same commodity in all sizes sold in a single retail food establishment.	Connecticut Regulation
	Characteristics of the label	Sec. 21a - 75-4*	The price per measure shall be displayed in type no smaller than that used for the retail price of the item, but in no event shall the price per measure appear in size less than pica type	Connecticut Regulation
	Basic unit	Sec. 21a - 75-5*	<p>The price shall be designated as per pint, quart or gallon or ounce or liter for commodities whose net quantity is expressed in units of pints, quarts, gallons or fluid ounces or ounces or liters [...] 50 feet or per 100 square feet, or per 100 feet as appropriate, for commodities and items whose net quantity is customarily expressed in units of feet, inches, square feet or square yards, or per product measurement or whose net quantities are expressed in units of area or length [...] 1 unit or 50 units or 100 units of commodities, whose net quantity is expressed by a numerical count [...] pound or as per ounce, whichever offers the most meaningful basis of comparison for the consumer, on all commodities whose net quantity is customarily expressed in units of pounds or ounces or both [...]</p>	Connecticut Regulation

Massachusetts

As noted above, Massachusetts was the first jurisdiction to make it mandatory to display unit pricing, which it did in September 1970²⁰. It was a pioneer in the field.

Moreover, Massachusetts is one of the few states to still require unit pricing on every foodstuff, although many exemptions exist.

Table 13: Details of legislation relating to unit pricing in Massachusetts

Law: Consumer's Council
Chapter 6: Section 115A. Unit pricing of packaged commodities; retail sale; regulations; enforcement; penalties; report
Regulation: 202 Code of Massachussets Regulation: Division of Standard
5.00: UNIT PRICING AND AUTOMATED RETAIL CHECKOUT SYSTEMS
5.01
Definitions
5.02
Exemptions
5.03
Means of Disclosure
5.04
Price Per Measure
5.05
Packaged Commodities Regulated and Unit of Measure to be Used
5.06
Extension of Time for Compliance
5.07
Responsibility for Compliance
5.08
Determination of Label Acceptability
5.09
Severability Provision
5.10
Inspection of Automated Retail Checkout Systems

²⁰ Monroe, Kent B. and Peter J. LaPlaca, 1972. "What Are the Benefits of Unit Pricing?" *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 36 (3), p. 18.

Table 14: Details of legislation relating to unit pricing in Massachusetts

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Application/ scope		5.03	All retail establishments subject to 202 CMR 5.00 shall disclose the unit price and item price to consumers	CMR
Definition		5.01	Unit Price means the price per measure	CMR
		5.01	Item Price means the total sales price	
		5.01	Retail Store means any retail outlet including wholesale clubs and membership warehouses that sells or offers for sale any packaged commodity that is listed in 202 CMR 5.01.	
		5.01	Packaged Commodity means any food, drug, device or cosmetic and any other article, product, or commodity of any kind or class which is customarily necessary or used for personal, family or household use and offered for sale at retail and which is listed in 202 CMR 5.05.	
Exemption	Prescription drug	5.02	Medecine sold by prescription only.	CMR
	Discount	5.02	Deal Items, such as, Cents Off, Bonus Packs, Percent Off, Half Price, or manufacturer Pre-Priced Items, if the same as or lower than regular selling price, provided the unit price is posted as required for "Non Deal" items.	
	Type of business	5.02	Packaged commodities sold by any retail establishment operated by a person as his sole place of business shall be exempt from 202 CMR 5.00 if gross annual sales are less than \$1,000,000.	
	Insufficient space	5.03	When the display space used for the packaged commodity is inadequate to set forth separate unit and item price legends as required hereunder [...] However any such alternative method must be approved by the Director, as specified in 202 CMR 5.06, Prior to being displayed.	
	Price indicated on merchandise	5.03	The retail establishment shall not be required to comply with the provisions of 202 CMR 5.03(1) and (2) as to color and (4) as to size of type, where the product or commodity carries an item price and unit price on its package, and where the unit price appears thereon in a size no smaller than that used for the item price.	
	Exempted products	5.03	Beverages subject to or complying with packaging or labelling requirements imposed under the Federal Alcohol Administration Act.	
			Packaged commodities which are sold in packages containing one or two of the units of measure prescribed in 202 CMR 5.00 and which have an item price plainly marked thereon; but only the particular packaged commodity in such units shall be exempt. All other items in excess of two multiples of the unit of measure must be unit priced.	
Standardization of unit of measure between states	5.05	Director may, upon written request of any multi-state retailer, authorize a different unit of measure to be used for an item or items in order to provide uniformity an compatibility throughout that retailers multi-state distribution system.		

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Display	Characteristics of the label	5.03	<p>The unit price label, stamp or tag must consist of no more than two dominant segments.</p> <p>(a) The left-hand segment of the label, stamp or tag must be orange: the other part of the label must be primarily white:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Orange shall be defined for purposes of 202 CMR 5.00 as being measured inclusively between the wavelengths of 595 and 620 millimicrons (or between 5950 and 6200 angstroms) on a normal color spectrum. For purposes of everyday recognition and operation, only the following identifying numbers for orange, as found in the U.S. Government General Services Administration Federal Standards Publication (Color-card) #595a and change notice 3, revised January 2, 1968, will be considered in compliance with the above specification: #22510, #12473, and #32246. 2. When a label at any time fails to fall within the color range specified in 202 CMR 5.03(1)(b)1., even though it may be due to the fading of the color, said label shall not be considered in compliance with 202 CMR 5.00. 	CMR
	Information on label	5.03	<p>The orange segment of the label, stamp, or tag must be conspicuously visible to the customer carrying the following data and no other:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The words "Unit Price" as a heading directly above the numerical unit price (b) The unit price [...] (c) The applicable "ply" count or thicknesses, for items such as paper products which are manufactured in numbers of folds showing such information. <p>The primarily white segment of the label, stamp, or tag must carry the following data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Item Price. (b) The description of the packaged commodity (c) The size of the commodity being sold. <p>Other stocking information may also be included thereon at the option of the retail establishment PROVIDED that said information does not in any way obscure, de-emphasize or confuse the unit price information.</p>	CMR
	Uniformity	5.05	<p>Director may, upon written request of any multi-state retailer, authorize a different unit of measure to be used for an item or items in order to provide uniformity and compatibility throughout that retailers multi-state distribution system.</p>	
	Electronic label	5.03	<p>Electronic shelf displays which display unit price, item price and other required information simultaneously, when incorporated in an electronic price scanning system and have been approved for retail use by the Director</p>	

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Display (cont'd)	Arrondissement du prix par unite de mesure	5.03	The unit price expressed in the following manner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$X.XX per unit for all commodities whose unit price is \$1.00 or greater. 2. XX.X¢ per unit for all commodities whose unit price is less than \$1.00 but greater than 10¢. 3. X.XX¢ per unit for all commodities whose unit price is 10¢ or less. 4. ¢ Cents, cnts, if expressed in cents. 5. \$, dollars, dols., dlrs., if expressed in dollars. 	CMR
	Characteristics of the label	5.03	The unit price label, stamp or tag must appear on the item itself or directly under the item on the shelf on which the item is displayed for items which are not specially displayed or stored. The Unit Price label must not in any way be obscured and must be visible at all	CMR
			For specially stored or displayed items such as frozen and cold storage commodities, and goods which are marketed on end displays, the unit price label, stamp, or tag shall appear on the shelf or display space contiguous with the area where the item is displayed.	
			The display of the unit price in any event shall be conspicuously visible at all times and appear on an orange background. The size of type used for the unit price legend shall be no less than ¼ the size used for the retail price, or 3/8 inch, whichever is greater.	
	Basic unit	5.05	The following commodities shall be labeled in accordance with 202 CMR 5.05. Each commodity must be unit priced only in the unit of measure listed below, unless otherwise approved by the Director [... <i>List of commodities</i>]	CMR
		5.04	Unless otherwise specified in 202 CMR 5.05, the unit price shall be expressed as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Price per pound for commodities whose net quantity is customarily expressed in units of pounds or (2) For purposes of price comparison all semi-viscous commodities of the same generic kind, if packaged in both terms of weight and fluid measure, shall be unit priced by the pound if packaged in terms of weight or by the pint if packaged in terms of fluid measure. (3) Price per pint, quart, or gallon for commodities whose net quantity is customarily expressed in units of pints, quarts, gallons or fluid ounces, or a combination thereof. (4) Price per 100 feet or 100 square feet, as appropriate, for commodities whose net quantity is customarily expressed in units of feet, inches, square feet or square yards. 	CMR

Australia

The Trade Practices (Industry Codes - Unit Pricing) Regulations 2009, which had been introduced on 1 July 2009, came into force on 1 December 2009. This regulation made it mandatory to display unit prices in all major retailers in accordance with the provision entitled “Retail Grocery Industry (Unit Pricing) Code of Conduct.”

In a press release on December 1, the Minister for Competition and Consumer Affairs, Dr. Craig Emerson, declared: “Unit pricing is a valuable tool that enables consumers to seek better value for money when shopping for groceries²¹ .”

This is how the most recent unit pricing legislation is constructed (Table 15, next page).

²¹ <http://minister.innovation.gov.au/Emerson/Pages/UNITPRICING.aspx>

Table 15: Legislation relating to unit pricing in Australia

Trades Practices (Industry Codes – Unit Pricing) Regulations 2009 Schedule 1 - Retail Grocery Industry (Unit Pricing) Code of Conduct
Contents 2 Commencement
Contents 3 Code of Conduct (a) prescription & (b) mandatory
Schedule 1, Part 1, paragraph 3 Definitions
Schedule 1, Part 1, paragraph 4 Application
Schedule 1, Part 2, paragraph 6 Display of unit prices
Schedule 1, Part 2, paragraph 7 Exempt grocery items (including food products)
Schedule 1, Part 2, paragraph 8 Units of measurement and form of unit price
Schedule 1, Part 2, paragraph 9 Advertising
Schedule 1, Part 3, paragraph 10 Exempt grocery categories and alternative units of measurement
Schedule 1, Part 3, paragraph 11 Alternative units of measurement

Table 16: Details of legislation relating to unit pricing in Australia

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Application/ scope		Contents 3	The code set out in Schedule 1: (a) is prescribed; and (b) is declared to be a mandatory industry code.	TPR 2009 Schedule 1
		Part 2, para 6	Unless subclause (3) or clause 7 applies, a prescribed grocery retailer must display a unit price for all grocery items sold by the retailer for which a selling price is displayed.	
Definition		Part 1	Unit price means the price (including GST) for a grocery item per unit of measure.	TPR 2009 Schedule 1
			Prescribed grocery retailer means any of the following: (a) a store-based grocery retailer; (b) an online grocery retailer; (c) a participating grocery retailer.	
			Store-based grocery retailer means a person that sells the minimum range of food-based grocery items ¹ to consumers in retail premises: (a) that have more than 1 000 square metres of floor space dedicated to the display of grocery items; and (b) that are used primarily for the sale of food-based grocery items.	
			Online grocery retailer means a person that sells, on a website, the minimum range of food-based grocery items to consumers.	
			Participating grocery retailer means a person (other than a store-based grocery retailer or an online grocery retailer) that: (a) sells the minimum range of food-based grocery items to consumers; and (b) voluntarily displays a unit price (other than in an advertisement of a kind mentioned in clause 9) for 1 or more grocery items sold by the person (other than exempt grocery items under clause 7); and (c) is not required to display the unit price for the grocery item under a law of the Commonwealth, or a law of a State or Territory.	
Note 1: Minimum extent of products offered (a) bread; (b) breakfast cereal; (c) butter; (d) eggs; (e) flour; (f) fresh fruit and vegetables; (g) fresh milk; (h) meat; (i) rice; (j) sugar; (k) packaged « other than food mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (j).				

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document
Exemption	Liquidation	Part 2, para 7	A prescribed grocery retailer is not required to display a unit price for a grocery item that: (a) is sold at a price that has been marked down from the selling price for which the retailer would usually sell the grocery item, because: (i) the grocery item or the grocery item's packaging is damaged; or (ii) the grocery item is a perishable item that may deteriorate if it is not used by a particular date; or (iii) the grocery item is a discontinued grocery item; or	TPR 2009 Schedule 1
	Type of business	Part 2, para 7	A prescribed grocery retailer is not required to display a unit price for a grocery item that: (c) is in a grocery category mentioned in clause 10.	
	Packages with assorted products	Part 2, para 7	A prescribed grocery retailer is not required to display a unit price for a grocery item that: [...] (b) is a bundle of different grocery items offered for sale for a single price; or	
	Exempted products	Part 3, para 10	Exempt grocery categories A prescribed grocery retailer is not required to display a unit price for any of the following ² :	
	Single price posted	Part 2, para 6	If a selling price is displayed in such a way that it applies to more than 1 grocery item, the prescribed grocery retailer is not required to display a unit price in relation to the selling price.	
	Type of business	Part 1, para 3	[...] In retail premises: that have more than 1 000 square metres of floor space dedicated to the display of grocery items	
	Food-based establishment	Part 1, para 3	[...] In retail premises: that are used primarily for the sale of food-based grocery items.	
	Advertising	Part 2, para 9	If a prescribed grocery retailer uses television, radio or other electronic media (other than a website) to advertise grocery items, the retailer is not required to display or advertise the unit price for the grocery item in the advertisement.	
	Note 2: Categories of exempted products (a) books, magazines and stationery; (b) optical discs and magnetic storage devices used for computing, sound reproduction or video, whether or not they are pre-loaded with content; (c) photography items and equipment; (d) electrical items (other than batteries and light bulbs); (e) garden tools, and items for garden or pool maintenance or for garden or pool decoration; (f) flowers, including fresh, dried and imitation flowers; (g) furniture; (h) hardware items; (i) manchester; (j) computer equipment; (k) audio-visual equipment; (l) telecommunications items or equipment; (m) items for motor vehicle maintenance or repair; (n) sports and camping equipment; (o) toys; (p) household appliances and kitchen and bathroom utensils; (q) clothing, jewellery and other fashion items (other than make-up); (r) services, and goods supplied as part of providing a service, including mobile phone recharges; (s) goods for hire; (t) cigarettes and other tobacco products, including nicotine replacement products; (u) alcoholic beverages; (v) haberdashery; (w) items sold from vending machines; (x) meals prepared at the retail premises for immediate consumption.			

General criteria	Specific criteria	Location	Detail	Document	
Display	Characteristics of the label	Part 2, para 6	The retailer must ensure that the unit price for a grocery item: (a) is displayed prominently and in close proximity to the selling price for the grocery item; and (b) is legible and unambiguous.	TPR 2009 Schedule 1	
	Basic unit	Part 2, para 8	Unless clause 11 applies, a prescribed grocery retailer must display the unit price for a grocery item using the most relevant of the following units of measurement: (a) for a grocery item supplied by volume — per 100 millilitres; (b) for a grocery item supplied by weight — per 100 grams; (c) for a grocery item supplied by length — per metre; (d) for a grocery item supplied by area — per square metre; (e) for a grocery item supplied by number — per item included.		
	Uniformity	Part 2, para 8	The most relevant unit of measure for a grocery item is: (a) if there is 1 unit of measure displayed on the packaging of the grocery item as the unit of measure by which the grocery item is supplied — the unit of measure displayed on that packaging; or (b) if there is more than 1 unit of measure displayed on the packaging of the grocery item as the units of measurement by which the grocery item is supplied — the unit of measure by which that grocery category is most often supplied.		
	Rounding of unit price		Part 2, para 8		If a unit price is at least \$1.00, the unit price must be displayed in dollars and whole cents.
					If a unit price is less than \$1.00, the unit price must be displayed either: (a) in dollars and whole cents; or (b) in whole cents.
					The unit price is to be worked out to the nearest 1 cent (rounding 0.5 cents upwards).
	Advertising	Part 2, para 9	If a prescribed grocery retailer: (a) advertises a grocery item: (i) in print media (including catalogues and newspapers); or (ii) on a website (other than video or audio files similar in nature to television or radio advertisements); and (b) displays a selling price for the grocery item in the advertisement; the retailer must display a unit price for the grocery item in the advertisement in accordance with this code.		
Uniformity	Part 2 para 10	A prescribed grocery retailer must display the unit price for a grocery item that is in a grocery category mentioned in column 2 of an item in the following table by using the unit of measure mentioned in column 3 of the item.			

Comparative Law: Provisions at the service of consumers

In this section, we compare the data collected in the previous chapter in order to highlight the provisions favourable to consumers. To do this, we use the following typology that emerged from the coding of the legal documents: application/scope, display and exemptions. We did not analyze the definitions since their comparison is of little interest²², however, for informational purposes and in the interests of clarity, we thought it better to leave them in the tables.

Application and scope

The scope of the legislative measures related to unit pricing is described in general, all-encompassing terms. Sometimes, certain exemptions to the law on unit pricing are identified inside these general provisions, and sometimes this information can be found elsewhere in the document.

The fundamental distinction between the various types of legislation studied resides in the mandatory use of unit pricing. In the case of the guidelines of *Handbook* 130, this is a voluntary measure that requires merchants to follow a set of standards if they wish to offer unit pricing²³. In contrast, states such as Massachusetts²⁴, and countries such as Australia²⁵ and the United Kingdom²⁶ make this type of pricing mandatory. Quebec, meanwhile, occupies a hybrid position, since while it makes the posting of unit prices

²² It remains interesting to note that the European Community defines as “selling price: the final price [...] including VAT and all other taxes.” Thus the selling price in Europe and the unit price should include taxes. In Quebec, a fruit salad is taxable, a fruit is not, nor is a processed peeled fruit that is not mixed (fresh pineapple in a bowl for example).

²³ Any retail establishment providing unit price information for packaged commodities shall provide the unit price information in the manner prescribed herein.

²⁴ All retail establishments subject to 202 CMR 5.00 shall disclose the unit price and item price to consumers.

²⁵ The code set out in Schedule 1:

- (a) is prescribed; and
- (b) is declared to be a mandatory industry code.

Unless subclause (3) or clause 7 applies, a prescribed grocery retailer must display a unit price for all grocery items sold by the retailer for which a selling price is displayed.

²⁶ where a trader indicates that any product is or may be for sale to a consumer, he shall indicate the unit price of that product in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

obligatory, it permits retailers to waive the requirement of marking the price on each product individually.

To varying degrees, these various strategies benefit all consumers. By providing the framework of a voluntary code, a degree of uniformity is assured. However, it is clear that laws that make unit pricing mandatory are better in that they give all consumers access to information and enhance their ability to make choices. This is consistent with *European Community Preamble 6*, which maintains that the mandatory display of sale price and unit price “is the easiest way to enable consumers to evaluate and compare the price of products in an optimum manner and hence to make informed choices on the basis of simple comparisons” (see Box 4).

Display

Standards and measures governing the display of unit pricing are usually very specific. The Quebec legislation is probably the least specific with regard to the type of display and information associated with the display of unit pricing. While some provisions are relatively marginal, even specific to particular regions, others are pervasive and are sometimes found in all the laws (except those of Quebec). The typology we have developed contains a dozen or so essential features of pricing: characteristics of the label, clarity, currency, electronic label, information on the label, infant formula, advertisements or printed material, discounts, metric or imperial system, basic unit or uniformity.

Rounding

Rounding is a widely used procedure; there are provisions governing the rounding of unit prices in the United Kingdom, in *Handbook 130*, in Connecticut, in Massachusetts

and in Australia. The point of this procedure is to avoid the confusion caused by an endless string of fractions of a cent²⁷.

Generally, items whose unit price is greater than \$1.00 are rounded off to hundredths of dollars, while the retailer may choose to display items with a unit price of less \$1.00 in hundredths of a dollar (e.g. \$0.67/100ml) or in cents (e.g. 67 cents/ 100ml)²⁸. In the UK, the unit price can be displayed in tenths of a penny (e.g. 67.3p/100ml).

Characteristics of the label

Many laws contain specific directives related to the general characteristics of the label, such as size, colour, and location; several also specify font size. On this last point, Quebec requires the price to be highlighted in 28-point characters, while the rest of the information contained on the label must be in at least 10-point characters. Connecticut has adopted a different strategy: to place the unit price in the foreground. Thus, the size of the unit price must match the size of the sale price²⁹. Somewhat like Massachusetts, Connecticut requires that the part of the label that shows the unit price be in a particular color (e.g. orange in Massachusetts). Finally, size is sometimes specified and it states several times that the label must be placed in close proximity to the product.

²⁷ See Chapter 4 for examples where the rounding of prices per unit of measurement would have been relevant

²⁸ For example in Australia:

If a unit price is at least \$1.00, the unit price must be displayed in dollars and whole cents.

If a unit price is less than \$1.00, the unit price must be displayed either:

(a) in dollars and whole cents; or

(b) in whole cents.

²⁹ The price per measure shall be displayed in type no smaller than that used for the retail price of the item.

Clarity

Some laws contain provisions specifying that the information on the unit price must be clear, unambiguous, easily identifiable, easy to read and placed close to the product.

Currency

The United Kingdom has introduced a provision requiring unit pricing in both Euros and sterling if the retail price of the product is displayed in both currencies.

Electronic labels

Connecticut has the only law specifically governing the use of electronic labels. Note that the retail price must be written in blue while the unit price must be written in orange, in every kind of business.

Information on the label

Several types of information can be found on the labels. To ensure that a certain minimum of information is on every label, *Handbook 130*, Massachusetts and Connecticut specify certain data that must be found there. For example, in Connecticut, the word “Unit price” must appear at the top and the unit price must always be to the left of the selling price or above it.

Infant Formula

In *Handbook 130*, as well as in other laws that we have not analyzed in depth, such as those of Florida, there is a provision concerning infant formulas and maternalized milk. This stipulates that the information related to the unit price must be based on the product once reconstituted.

Advertisements or publicity material

Apart from a few exceptions³⁰, the United Kingdom, the European Community, Connecticut and Australia require the unit price to be printed in advertisements, circulars or other printed material in which the retail price is displayed.

As we saw in Chapter 1, such a provision would allow consumers to more easily compare the prices of products being promoted or advertized.

Discounts

The United Kingdom legislation is the only one that sees fit to specify that discounted products must satisfy the same labelling requirements in terms of unit pricing³¹.

³⁰ See the next section on exemptions.

³¹ Where a trader proposes to sell products to which this Order applies at less than the selling price or the unit price previously applicable and indicated in accordance with article 7(1), he may comply with the obligations specified in articles 4(1) (to indicate the selling price) and 5(1) (to indicate the unit price) by indicating by a general notice or any other visible means that the products are or may be for sale at a reduction, provided that the details of the reduction are prominently displayed, unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible.

Metric or imperial system

Handbook 130 and the United Kingdom legislation include clauses relating to the use of the metric and imperial system for unit pricing. In such cases, the price calculated on the basis of the alternative measuring system must not be more prominent than the unit recognized by the state.

Base unit or uniformity

Finally, apart from Quebec, every legislation considered in our study contains provisions specifying the basic units to be used in unit pricing or their uniformity. For example in the UK, a list of products is specified together with its basic standardized unit, e.g. 100 ml for soup and 100 g for cookies. Australia has very similar provisions to the United Kingdom in this regard. In the United States, the imperial system is the norm, and so the basic units must be imperial. Moreover, we noted specifically in Connecticut, *Handbook 130* and in Massachusetts, that the same base unit must be used consistently for all similar products in the same store³².

Exemptions

There are a variety of exemptions from unit pricing. We thoroughly analyzed the types of exemptions found in the various legislations: single choice, confusion, packages containing an assortment of products and one price displayed, insufficient space, small size, prescription drugs, selling price the same as unit price, price indicated on the product, exempted products, bulk products, advertising, discounts and liquidation, and types of business.

³² For example, in *Handbook 130*: “If different brands or package sizes of the same consumer commodity are expressed in more than one unit of measure (e.g., soft drinks are offered for sale in 2 l bottles and 12 fl oz cans), the retail establishment shall unit price the items consistently .”

Single choice

This exemption is found in *Handbook 130* and nowhere else in our sample. It frees the retailer from the obligation to follow the model of *Handbook 130* in cases where products are only available in one brand in one size³³. Specifically, this measure introduces a great deal of confusion into the interpretation of the retailer's obligations as set forth in the legislation. For example, will an apple juice and an apple nectar be considered the same or a different commodity?

Confusion

The European Community permits an exemption from displaying the unit price if the information could be confusing³⁴. It is not clear in what kinds of situation this type of information could be confusing.

Packages containing assorted products with one price displayed

Several lawmakers have seen fit to exempt the sale of packages containing an assortment of products. Such provisions can be found in the United Kingdom, in *Handbook 130*, in Connecticut³⁵ and in Australia. For example, a snack pack containing an apple, a piece of cheese and some crackers would not have unit pricing.

³³ Commodities shall be exempt from these provisions when only one brand in only one size is offered for sale in a particular retail establishment.

³⁴ Member States may exempt from the obligation to indicate the price per unit of measurement products for which such indication would not be useful because of their nature or purpose or is likely to create confusion.

³⁵ For example, in Connecticut the following are exempt: "Different products co-mingled in one receptacle or package for the purpose of one-price sale."

Australia has decided not to apply unit pricing when an assortment of several products is displayed at the same price.

Insufficient space and small size

There are exemptions for unit pricing when the products are very small or when space to display the price is limited. Connecticut excludes snacks weighing less than five ounces (140 g) while *Handbook 130* stipulates that weight or volume may not exceed one ounce (28 g) or one fluid ounce (29 ml) respectively. Massachusetts permits a similar exemption, but it must be approved by the State. This type of exemption could greatly reduce the relevance of unit pricing. In many cases it could lead to significant price differences just between individual and larger portions.

Prescription drugs

In Massachusetts and Connecticut, prescription drugs are exempt, while in other states, these products are not included under unit pricing legislation. In fact it seems to us preferable to limit this type of pricing to food and ordinary consumer items.

Asking price equal to unit price

The European Community and the United Kingdom do not require unit prices to be displayed when the asking price and the unit price are the same. A 100 g or 100 ml product will not display its unit price. It seems superfluous to introduce an exemption for a scenario that occurs so rarely.

Price on the product

In Quebec, a product labelled individually does not have to specify its unit price on the shelf label. In Massachusetts, the obligation to indicate the unit price is still maintained, but the unit price can be displayed on the shelf label or on the product, as long as labelling standards are met. In Massachusetts, therefore, there is no way of avoiding marking prices on individual products or of displaying unit prices.

Exempted products: bulk

Some legislation includes exemptions on unit pricing for certain products. For example, Connecticut does not require it to be displayed on certain alcoholic beverages, *Handbook 130* exempts products with a retail price of less than 50 cents. Australia has a long list of exempted products including books, cigarettes, toys, and computer equipment. This list does not include food, apart from food prepared for immediate consumption.

Advertising

Some laws require unit pricing when prices are displayed in any kind of advertising. This is particularly true in the United Kingdom³⁶ which does, however, specify certain exemptions, such as small shops, cinemas or television broadcasts. In Australia, the exemption is extended to television, radio and all electronic media except for websites.

³⁶ The requirement in paragraph (1) applies to an advertisement for a product only when the selling price of the product is indicated in the advertisement.

Discounts and Liquidation

Most laws analyzed provided no exemptions for discounts. The only exceptions are Australia and the United Kingdom,³⁷ which allow exemptions for clearance items. Both carefully define the term “liquidation” as it applies to products whose packaging is damaged or has deteriorated. For Australia, discontinued products can be exempted if they are liquidated. Massachusetts is the only state to allow an exemption on discounted articles, strictly speaking³⁸.

In Quebec, the *Office de la protection du consommateur* informed us that retailers must display the unit price of discounted products (see Box 6).

As we showed in the first chapter, using the unit price is especially effective for comparing prices of products on sale with those at regular price. An exemption from unit pricing for discounted product would distort this type of tool.

³⁷ Any product the price of which has been reduced from the usual price at which it is sold, on account of:
(a) its damaged condition; or
(b) the danger of its deterioration.

³⁸ Deal Items, such as, Cents Off, Bonus Packs, Percent Off, Half Price, or manufacturer Pre-Priced Items, if the same as or lower than regular selling price, provided the unit price is posted as required for “Non Deal” items.

Box 6: Does the unit price of discounted food have to be displayed? Reply of the Office de la protection du consommateur

The specific exemptions set forth in Section 91.1 of the Regulation apply even if the merchant has selected the general exemption under section 91.4, but if he intends to avail himself of these specific exemptions, the merchant must meet certain conditions, including that of displaying the unit price of the product nearby, as specified in Section 91.3.

Moreover, a merchant who avails himself of the exemption under Section 91.4 must also meet certain conditions including that of affixing a shelf label in accordance with the requirements of Section 91.5, this requirement is described in Section 91.4 c).

Section 91.4 c) states that the obligation to display a applies to every product offered for sale in the merchant's establishment, without specifying whether the product is offered for sale at the regular price or on sale; we therefore conclude that a poster announcing a sale must also meet the requirements of Section 91.5.

Thus, for products described in paragraph c) of Section 91.5, the label must indicate, in addition to the price of the product, the price per unit of measure, both for the label on the product at offered at the regular price and for the product offered on sale.

However, the requirement that any trader who wants to benefit from the exemption under Section 91.1 e) must display the regular price of the product close to the place where it is offered for sale, no indication of the unit price is required. The merchant who avails himself of the exemption under Section 91.4 has two choices:

he could affix a sale price shelf label on the regular shelf price label; this label will include a mention of the regular price of the product in addition to the sale price of the product and the unit sale price.

he could affix the sale price shelf label near the regular price shelf label, it will then be sufficient to indicate the price of the product on sale and the unit sale price.

Type of business

In some cases, businesses may be exempted from the requirement to display unit pricing. The European Community allows its Member States to exempt certain businesses “to the extent that the obligation to indicate the unit price would constitute an excessive burden imposed on small retail businesses ...” but this would be for a “transitional period only”.

Massachusetts, Connecticut and Australia meanwhile, have decided to exempt certain small businesses from this requirement. The definition of small business may be based on surface area (Connecticut, Australia), annual sales (Massachusetts) or whether the business is operated by the owner (Connecticut). Australia also exempts retailers that do not sell certain commodities (e.g. milk and flour).

Finally, the Quebec legislation applies only to businesses that have a permit from Quebec’s Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food under the *Food Regulation*.

Discussion of exemptions

As we have seen, there are many types of exemptions in the legislation. While some seem consistent and justified, none is so indispensable that all states or provinces have seen fit to put it in place. The most popular types of exemptions are those related to small businesses and those on packages containing an assortment of products.

This leads us to conclude that exemptions from displaying the unit price should be kept to an absolute minimum, if the integrity of such a system is to be maintained.

In the next chapter we analyze the situation in Canada through a field survey conducted in Quebec and Ontario. Several recommendations that we make there are inspired by our comparative law analysis, which allowed us to demonstrate the feasibility of such legislative provisions, since they are already being applied elsewhere.

Chapter 4: The situation in Canada

Following our comparative law analysis and our survey, we investigated how large Canadian retailers operating in the food sector display unit pricing in their establishments. Our goal was to compare two different situations: Quebec and Ontario. As pointed out earlier, Quebec's *Consumer Protection Act* makes this type of display mandatory in retail outlets that wish to be exempted from the requirement to display the price on each item. Ontario, on the other hand, has no similar provision, which is the case in the rest of Canada.

To help us with this survey work, we first asked some companies whether they had any specific policies on unit pricing and also attempted to understand their point of view. Wal-Mart, Jean Coutu and the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors agreed to answer our questions. We then solicited the services of a readability and text clarity expert, Celine Beaudet, who helped us analyze the labels used by retailers. Celine Beaudet is a professor in the Arts and Communication Department at the University of Sherbrooke. The research topics she specializes in are: fundamentals of written communication, intelligibility of utilitarian texts, and argumentative strategies in public discourse³⁹.

Food retailers

The three organizations that responded to our questions unanimously declared that unit pricing is “an effective tool for comparing prices”. One respondent pointed out that it also allowed the comparison of house brands alongside national brands. Another respondent added that as a consumer, he regularly consulted unit prices when comparing prices.

³⁹ Her resume can be consulted at http://www.com.ulaval.ca/groupe_rediger/pdf/CV%20-%20C_Beaudet.pdf

When it came to the complexities of setting up a unit pricing system, responses were more nuanced. While all the respondents said they largely support the Quebec legislation, one respondent stated that setting up such a system posed a number of challenges. It would involve adapting the technology and managing the operations in vast networks. Another respondent, on the other hand, thought that the change would be relatively simple: once the criteria had been established, all that needed to be done would be to adapt the labels and put them on the shelves.

None of the respondents said they had conducted any study or survey to measure their customers' satisfaction with, or understanding of, unit pricing. Similarly, there does not appear to have been any information campaign to inform consumers of the existence of this information on the label.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the existence of such an obligation in Quebec has had repercussions throughout Canada as a whole. In fact, the changes in Quebec have led some retailers to standardize their practices in other parts of Canada and to inform Canadian consumers about unit pricing.

Readability and clarity of unit pricing labels in Canada

Before addressing the issue of the clarity and readability of labels, we should define our terms. According to the expert we consulted, a label is “a kind of written message with one communicative function” not dozens. In our case, the labels are set in place to permit information to be read (readability) and then to make this information understandable (intelligibility or clarity). In other words, a good label must above all be legible and contain information that consumers can easily understand. Readability demands an effort from the consumer to read the message, while clarity requires an effort to process the information.

The readability and clarity of labels are the result of factors that together allow consumers to assimilate information properly, or on the contrary, make it difficult or impossible for them to do so. With regard to unit pricing, the readability expert has identified a number of factors that affect readability and clarity. We have divided this into two categories. The first category includes the characteristics of the label itself, while the second focuses more on how the unit pricing on the label is presented.

Assessing the readability and clarity of a label is an arduous and perilous exercise. Indeed, there are many factors that come into play in the task of improving the recognition and understanding of information aimed at consumers.

Although no label is perfect, some transmit information better than others. Using the criteria mentioned by the expert, we developed a grid to quantify the performance of labels based on how well they display unit prices. In this section, therefore, we describe the criteria known to affect the readability and clarity of texts and how we evaluate each criterion⁴⁰. Note that this is a qualitative evaluation which is primarily intended at illustrating the performance of various retailers' pricing policies.

Graphic characteristics of shelf labels

In analyzing the graphic characteristics of labels, we identified a series of factors that make it easier or harder to read and understand information. These factors are: competing information overload, presence of a logo and organization of information according to the graphic alignment principle.

⁴⁰ Note that in many cases, several models of shelf labels were found in the retail stores. We decided in our study to analyze the most common, i.e. a label for a regular price article located on a shelf in an aisle. Consequently, labels on refrigerators, at the ends of aisles and in displays are not analyzed.

Competing information overload

When designing the labels, some retailers chose to include information not intended for consumers, but for their employees. When consumers are faced with a label, they have to make an effort of analysis and interpretation to decide whether the information is intended for them or not. An important component of clear messages is relevance of information. According to Celine Beaudet: “The reader will not make the effort to understand a written text if the information does not give him anything. Drowning in information restricted to the merchant or the producer of the label undermines the effectiveness of the communication. It requires the reader to sort through the information, and this effort is counter-productive.” A good label will minimize the presence of information that is useless to consumers.

Evaluation:

++ will be awarded if less than 7.5% of the surface of the label is occupied by information for the merchant;

+ will be awarded if between 7.5% and 15% of the surface of the label is occupied by information for the merchant;

± point will be awarded if between 15% and 22.5% of the surface of the label is occupied by information for the merchant;

- will be awarded if between 22.5% and 30% of the surface of the label is occupied by information for the merchant;

-- will be awarded if more than 30% of the surface of the label is occupied by information for the merchant;

Presence of logos

Just as information overload on labels affects their comprehensibility, the presence of corporate logos has no informative value. It distracts attention instead of directing the eye to provide useful information to consumers.

Evaluation:

++ if the label does not show the logo;

-- if the label does not show the logo;

Graphic alignment principle

Distributing the information in the information block according to the alignment principle makes it easier for the reader to decipher the information. In fact, according to the experts we consulted, if there is no organization and consistency in the labelling, the reader will be disinclined to make the effort to understand the information it contains.

For our purposes, Ms. Beaudet suggested dividing the label into four blocks. The choice spot is the upper right, which should be reserved for the price, which should be the biggest visual element and should be the most attractive to the eye. The eye is then drawn to what is nearest to that. Logically, this should be the unit price in the lower right corner. Since the top of the label is the area of choice, she says, the top left corner should be devoted to the name of the product along with its volume or weight. This information is complementary and must be presented all together in the same place. Finally, there remains the lower left corner “for information for the merchant: barcode, product and inventory no., date [...] logo.” A good label groups information of the same type together and avoids mixing information of different types.

Figure 7: Two examples of labels that follow the graphic alignment principle (rectangular and square labels)

Name of Product, volume	Price
Retailer Zone (bar code, date, batch number, product, logo, etc..)	Unit Price

Name of Product, volume
Price
Unit Price
Retailer Zone (bar code, date, batch number, product, logo, etc..)

Evaluation:

- ++ will be awarded if the label fully respects the alignment principle and if the information for consumers and merchants is located in separate areas;
- ± will be awarded if the label complies with the alignment principle, but mixes information for merchants and consumers in these areas;
- will awarded if the label does not respect the alignment principle or mixes information for merchants and consumers in these areas more than once.

Indication of unit price

The way that the unit price is specified on the label has an influence on the readability and clarity of information and therefore on its assimilation by the consumer. The factors taken into account here are: prominence of information, rounding, and the use of appropriate symbols.

Prominence

According to our readability expert, “the eye is attracted by the larger visual elements. Information for consumers should be in the foreground. To ensure readability, these elements (price, product description and unit price) should be in larger characters than the information for the merchant and his employees. Putting an item in bold also draws the eye to this information. A good label is one that draws the eye to the relevant information.

Evaluation:

++ will be awarded if the font size of the price, the unit price and the product description are larger than those of the information for the merchant;

± will be awarded if the font size of the price, the unit price or the description of the product is the same as the information for the merchant;

-- points will be awarded if the font size of the price, the unit price or the description of the product is smaller than the information for the merchant or if bold is used for information not intended for consumers.

Rounding

To avoid consumer confusion, the level of abstraction of the information provided must be kept to a minimum. For our purposes, the unit price needs to be expressed with some degree of accuracy, but beyond a certain limit, absolute accuracy is irrelevant and can even lead to confusion. For example, a merchant may decide to display a unit price of \$1.4975 per 100g or \$1.50 per 100g. For Celine Beaudet: “By adding 4 decimal places, the retailer makes the number abstract. She goes on to say, “The cognitive effort required of the reader is greater when the information to be processed does not correspond to actual experience. In our case, rounding off the figure to get pennies instead of a fifth or an eighth of a cent seems to me a decision in favour of the consumer (who has no experience of fractions of cents).

Results of unit pricing study on in Canada

In our survey of labelling practices among food retailers in Quebec and Ontario, we carried out an analysis of these practices at major retailers in Quebec and Ontario. In addition to the three traditional grocery chains (Loblaws, Sobeys and Métro), we also visited the largest pharmacies (Rexall and Shoppers Drug Mart in Ontario, Jean Coutu and Shoppers Drug Mart in Quebec), and Costco, Walmart and Couche Tard (Mac's convenience store). We visited a total of 37 retail outlets (see Appendix 2 for the list of stores visited). The stores were selected within Greater Montreal and Ottawa as well as outlying areas. About one third of the stores visited were located in medium-sized cities (Rawdon, Quebec and Cornwall, Ontario). For the purposes of our evaluation, we have selected a standard label for each franchise.

Table 17: Results of label readability and clarity at major Canadian retailers

Chain	Label Criteria			Criteria indicating unit price			TOTAL	Retailer surveyed (see Appendix 2)
	Overload	Logo	Grid	Weighting	Rounding	Symbol		
Costco	2	1	2	0	0	1	6	12, 20
Couche-Tard	1	0	1	1	1	1	5	22, 26
Couche-Tard (Mac's)	0	1	2	0	0	0	3	7, 19
Jean Coutu	0,5	0	1	2	0	1	4, 5	17, 23, 37
Loblaws (including YIG and provigo)	0,5	1	1	0	0	0	2, 5	4, 9, 18, 30
Loblaws (Maxi)	1,5	1	1	1	0	0	4, 5	37, 34
Métro	1	1	1	2	1	2	8	10, 14, 28, 36
Métro (Super C)	1,5	1	1	1	1	2	7, 5	21
Quickie	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3
Rexall	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	6
Shoppers Drug Mart	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	8, 16
Shoppers Drug Mart (Pharmaprix)	1	1	1	0	1	1	5	24, 33
Sobeys (Foodland)	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	13
Sobeys (IGA)	1	1	0	2	0	1	5	25, 29, 35
Sobeys (Price Chopper)	0,5	1	0	1	1	0	3,5	1, 2
Walmart (Ontario)	1	1	2	0	0	0	4	11, 15
Walmart (Quebec)	0	1	1	1	0	1	4	31, 32
WEIGHTING	2	1	2	2	1	2	10	n = 37

Survey Results by Retail Store

The field survey confirmed that the major retail stores offer standardized labelling to consumers. Apart from language differences, Métro and Costco use exactly the same pattern of label in Ontario and in Québec, which is why we are analyzing their labels *en bloc*. Loblaw, Sobeys, Couche-Tard, Shoppers Drug Mart and Walmart, however, have labelling practices that vary from one province to another, which is why these groups are evaluated separately for each province.

Costco

As we can see, the Costco label is very sparse and also very large. Most of the information on the label is for consumers, apart from the bar code and number in the upper left corner.

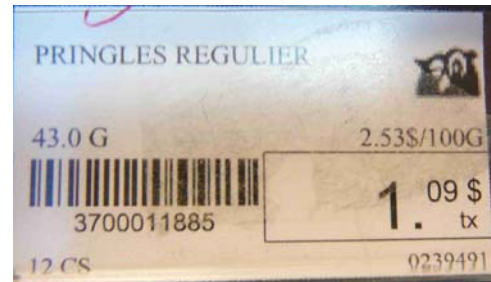


In our evaluation, the Costco label stood out in terms of its general characteristics and was awarded three "++". In fact, the information intended for consumers is clearly divided (the top band is for the merchant one and the remainder of the label is for the consumer) and is omnipresent.

The label performed less well in terms of display, especially as a result of bad rounding and certain details that are barely legible.

Couche-Tard

The Couche-Tard shelf label in Quebec is overloaded, as can be seen on this photograph. Overall performance could be described as average. We liked the way the unit pricing was displayed, close to the price, making it easy to read. Unfortunately the symbol prescribed by law for “gram” is lower-case “g,” not capital.



We also note a significant amount of information that is useless to the consumer (this covers 19% of the label), the presence of the logo, which distracts the consumer’s attention and a grid that mixes information intended for the consumer with information intended for the retailer. Furthermore, the font size used for information for the consumer is the same size as for information for the merchant

Couche-Tard (Mac's)

Mac's Couche-Tard banner performed less well than its Quebec counterpart. The label’s strong points are that the information intended for consumers is grouped together (at the top of the label) and is dominant . Also, unlike the label used in Quebec, this version does not have a logo.



However, it is regrettable that Couche-Tard does not provide consumers with the unit price. Also, the quantity of information intended for the merchant is difficult to justify (over than 30% of the label is covered with this).

Jean Coutu

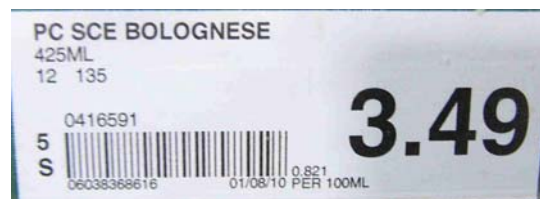
The Jean Coutu shelf label is standardized throughout Quebec and Ontario. However, aside from the price, it is difficult to read, even though the size of the characters used for information for the consumer is consistently larger than that used for other information.



As for to the label's negative points, we first of all remarked the presence of the logo, second, that the organization of information was condensed and mixed, third, that the amounts were calculated precisely to the point of irrelevance, and finally, like Couche-Tard, the symbol "G" was used instead of "g" to represent grams.

Loblaws (including Provigo and YIG)

Loblaws has similar a labelling system in many grocery stores under different banners (Loblaws, Your Independent Grocers (YIG) and Provigo). However, it performed very poorly in our evaluation, with an overall score of 2.5 points. Provigo actually performed worse than all retailers in Quebec.



Apart from the absence of a logo, the label performs poorly in all categories: wrong symbol (ML instead of ml), rounding to a fraction of a cent, and a huge bar code taking up nearly 20% of the label. In addition, the mention of unit pricing is tiny, in addition to being mixed with other information.

Loblaws (Maxi)

The label used in Loblaws' Maxi stores gets a much better score than in the Ontario distributor's other divisions. In particular, we noted that the unit price is easier to see and that there is less information that is not intended for consumers.



The label's performance is reduced because it mixes information for the merchant with information for the consumer, and also because of the use of wrong symbols, the absence of a dollar sign, poor rounding and equal weight given to the unit price and the symbol "72 S".

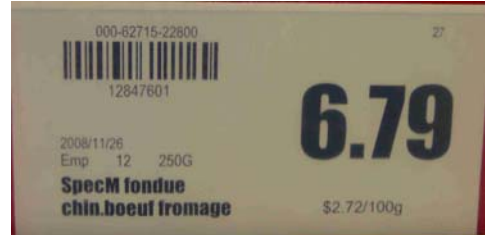
Métro

The Métro banner, in both Quebec and Ontario, gets the best score for its label. Consumer information is highlighted with the use of bold characters, the unit price is well rounded and the symbols used meet Canadian standards. Its weaknesses are the large amount of information for retailers, covering nearly 17% of the surface, and slight mixing of information for consumers with that for merchant.



Métro (Super C)

The label of the Super C chain associated with the Métro group is very similar to Métro's. This label compares very favourably because it has little competing information, but scores negatively because of a small unit price that does not draw the eye to it.



Quickie

Quickie does not display shelf labels. The prices are shown on each product. It is not evaluated here.

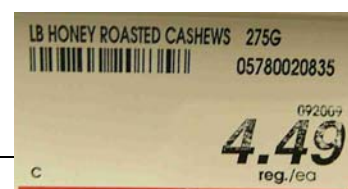
Rexall

Rexall comes in dead last in our evaluation. First of all, it does not display the unit price. Second, it mixes information for consumers and information for the merchant. Third, the basic unit indicated for weight is "GR." which does not comply with Canadian legislation. Finally, 20% of the label is devoted to information for the merchant.



Shoppers Drug Mart

Shoppers Drug Mart in Ontario does not fare much better than its competitor, Rexall. It also does not show unit



pricing, while Pharmaprix in Québec does so. In addition, information for consumers is mixed with information for the merchant and the characters used for competing information are in a similar size, in bold.

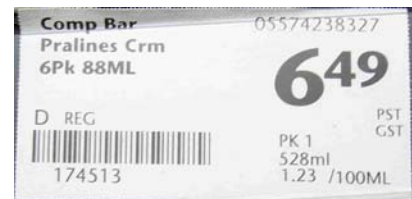
Shoppers Drug Mart (Pharmaprix)

Shoppers uses a label very similar to that used by Shoppers Drug Mart, to which the unit price has been added. It gets 2 extra points, because it shows unit pricing. However, this is much smaller than the series of numbers located in the upper right corner, which makes it lose 2 points. In addition, Shoppers Drug Mart uses the wrong symbol (G instead of g).



Sobey's (Foodland)

Sobeys manages its shelf labels in a more decentralized way. The strong point of the Sobeys Foodland labels is the rounding of the unit price, which is very clear. There is much room for improvement, however. In particular, it uses "ML" for millilitres, whereas the abbreviation should be "ml," and it omits to insert the dollar sign in its unit price. Moreover, this price is printed in small characters and is drowned out by other competing information presented in disorderly fashion that covers no less than 23% of the label.



Sobeys (IGA)

IGA gets the best score in the Sobeys group in our evaluation. The information intended for consumers is



highlighted with the use of a bold typeface. The symbols on the label are better than those on the IGA Foodland label, due to the clear prominence given to consumer information (in bold), and a better use of symbols. However, whereas Foodland rounds to the nearest cent, IGA rounds to a hundredth of a percent, causing it to lose a point.

Sobeys (Price Chopper)

The Price Chopper label has a structure that is similar to that of Foodland, although it performed slightly less well because of the larger area used to present information intended for the merchant.



Walmart (Ontario)

Walmart does not display unit pricing on its shelf labels in Ontario. However, its way of presenting information on the label is very interesting. In particular, all the information intended for consumers is located in the upper portion against a yellow background. However, it uses capital "G" for grams instead of "g" and we noted that much of the information on the label (21 %) is intended for the merchant.



Walmart (Quebec)

Unlike the label used in Ontario, the Quebec label displays the unit price. However, in our evaluation the Quebec label did not really perform any better



than the Ontario one. Indeed, the organization of the label is far more chaotic in the Quebec version and is overloaded with competing information, making it difficult to read. Finally the rounding to thousandths of dollars is difficult to understand and the information for consumers is sometimes the same size as that intended for the merchant.

Discussion

The results of the survey we conducted revealed three key issues. First, the evaluations we carried out showed that labeling practices in Quebec and Ontario are highly deficient in terms of readability and intelligibility. Food retailers will have to improve appreciably if they want to serve consumers better.

Secondly, the shortcomings vary widely from one chain to the next. Some organizations perform well for certain criteria while others are more difficult, and vice versa. This tells us that all the criteria could be satisfied if the best trade practices were adopted.

Finally, if the results of our assessment are compiled by province, as we did in Table 18, it will be remarked that the labels used in Quebec have far better (or far less worse) results than those used only in Ontario. For example, the labels used only in Ontario obtained the evaluation "--" 16 out of a possible 30 times, which represents 53% of their total, while the labels used in Quebec received this score only eight times. In short, our evaluation suggests that Quebec consumers have access to labels that have been assessed as being more readable and understandable than Ontario consumers.

Table 18: Retailers' performance by province

Results by province										
Province	++		+		±		-		--	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Quebec	10/36	28%	2/36	6%	16/36	44%	0	0%	8/36	22%
Ontario	8/30	27%	0	0%	6/30	20%	0	0%	16/30	53%
Quebec and Ontario	11/30	37%	0	0%	7/30	23%	3/30	10%	9/30	30%
Total	29/96	30%	2/96	2%	29/96	30%	3/96	3%	33/96	34%

Conclusion

Our research project has allowed us to make several observations on the state of unit pricing in Canada and to make comparisons with other similar practices around the world. Our field surveys have shown, on the one hand, that this information is relevant owing to the existence of appreciable price differences for similar products, and on the other, that Quebec retailers offer their customers labels that are far superior to those in Ontario in terms of readability and intelligibility. Our survey has also proven very informative. It has shown us, for example, that many Canadians, including seniors and young people, have difficulty comparing prices. Furthermore, by cross-referencing our data, we observed that consumers who are familiar with unit pricing and who see it in the store are more likely to use it as a way of getting the most for their money. These findings have led us to make the following recommendations:

In general:

RECOMMENDATION 1: Option consommateurs recommends that the federal and provincial governments implement measures to facilitate price comparison by members of vulnerable groups such as young people, seniors and allophones. This would entail unit price labelling being mandatory on all prepackaged foods.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Option consommateurs recommends that in the short term, the federal government adopt guidelines governing unit pricing in order to standardize and maximize its impact.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Option consommateurs recommends that all levels of government, in partnership with food retailers and consumer groups, establish

More specifically, Option consommateurs believes that the following aspects should be taken into consideration and included in the guidelines in the short term and in the legislation in the medium term. Option consommateurs also encourages retailers to take their inspiration from these recommendations in displaying unit pricing.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Option consommateurs recommends that the display of unit pricing be applied to the maximum number of products. Consequently, we recommend limiting possible exemptions to unit pricing policies to the minimum. Option consommateurs believes that such exemptions are exceptional and must be clearly justified.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Option consommateurs recommends that unit pricing be displayed in all types of advertising to consumers that states the sale price of the item.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Option consommateurs recommends that the unit price always be rounded to the nearest cent or one hundredth of a dollar.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Option consommateurs recommends that the basic unit used for unit pricing of similar products be always the same at the same retailer.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Option consommateurs recommends that discounted products should also display unit pricing.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Since it is impossible to compare the price of the product if the unit price is not calculated on the basis of the final quantity obtained by following the instructions on the product, Option consommateurs recommends that the basic quantity used to calculate the unit price be established on the basis of the final reconstituted products (i.e. infant formula).

Option consommateurs believes that merchants should make an effort to improve the intelligibility and the legibility of shelf labels and makes the following recommendations to them:

RECOMMENDATION 10: Option consommateurs recommends that the information for the consumer on the label be more prominent than the information for the merchant.

RECOMMENDATION 11: In order to facilitate the distinction between information intended for the consumer and information intended for the merchant, Option consommateurs recommends that information be laid out on a label in accordance with the graphic alignment principle. In addition, the information for the merchant should all be grouped in a specific section of the label.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Option consommateurs recommends that retailers avoid overloading their labels to the limit. In particular, Option consommateurs urges retailers not to display their logo.

After remarking numerous instances of non-compliance, Option consommateurs recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 13: Option consommateurs recommends that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and provincial officials ensure compliance with the *Weights and Measures Act and Regulations* as regards the use of symbols (g, ml, \$, etc.).

Finally, in order to improve the quality of unit pricing in Quebec, Option consommateurs makes the following recommendations to the *Office de la protection des consommateurs*:

RECOMMENDATION 14: Option consommateurs recommends that the *Office de la protection des consommateurs* devote particular attention to ensuring that merchants comply with the *Act* and the *Regulation* respecting the display of unit pricing and take the suitable measures in the event of noncompliance.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Option consommateurs recommends that the *Office de la protection des consommateurs* specify by regulatory means the basic units to be used in displaying unit prices.

RECOMMENDATION 16: Option consommateurs recommends that Quebec's *Consumer Protection Act* be clarified in order to remove any doubt as to the obligation to display the unit price of products on sale.

Appendix 1: Detailed survey results

Dec. 18, 2009

OPTION CONSOMMATEURS: ATTITUDES TOWARDS UNIT PRICING - DEC. 2009 (PN6559)

Q1C. HOW MUCH OF A ROLE DO YOU PLAY IN BUYING GROCERIES IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD? IS BUYING GROCERIES MOSTLY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, A RESPONSIBILITY YOU SHARE EQUALLY WITH SOMEONE ELSE OR ARE YOU NOT USUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR BUYING GROCERIES?

	GENDER		AGE					REGION							LANGUAGE					
	TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.	Other
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
Grocery shopping mostly your responsibility	51%	29%	71%	34%	42%	57%	58%	62%	49%	51%	49%	60%	54%	51%	52%	42%	56%	53%	49%	45%
Grocery shopping is a shared responsibility	29%	39%	21%	27%	44%	29%	27%	23%	33%	30%	29%	21%	24%	34%	28%	34%	32%	29%	31%	30%
Not responsible for grocery shopping	18%	30%	8%	39%	14%	13%	14%	13%	16%	19%	20%	18%	20%	14%	21%	21%	10%	17%	19%	22%
DK/NA	1%	2%	1%	1%	-	1%	2%	2%	2%	-	2%	1%	2%	1%	-	3%	1%	1%	1%	4%

Q1C. HOW MUCH OF A ROLE DO YOU PLAY IN BUYING GROCERIES IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD? IS BUYING GROCERIES MOSTLY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, A RESPONSIBILITY YOU SHARE EQUALLY WITH SOMEONE ELSE OR ARE YOU NOT USUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR BUYING GROCERIES?

	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION				EMPLOYMENT STATUS							FAMILY INCOME						
	TOTAL	Adults only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Student	Retired	Unemployed	TOTAL Employed	Emp. Full-time	Emp. Part-time	Self-employed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
Grocery shopping mostly your responsibility	51%	58%	43%	45%	35%	82%	23%	60%	63%	46%	44%	50%	53%	73%	59%	48%	51%	30%
Grocery shopping is a shared responsibility	29%	27%	32%	34%	26%	18%	18%	25%	16%	35%	39%	24%	28%	14%	26%	37%	33%	43%
Not responsible for grocery shopping	18%	14%	24%	20%	39%	-	56%	13%	17%	18%	17%	26%	17%	13%	14%	14%	16%	27%
DK/NA	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	-	3%	2%	4%	1%	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%	-	-

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

ENVIRONICS RESEARCH

Q1C. HOW MUCH OF A ROLE DO YOU PLAY IN BUYING GROCERIES IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD? IS BUYING GROCERIES MOSTLY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, A RESPONSIBILITY YOU SHARE EQUALLY WITH SOMEONE ELSE OR ARE YOU NOT USUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR BUYING GROCERIES?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col I / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K-1 Mil.	5K-100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
Grocery shopping mostly your responsibility	51%	34%	48%	56%	63%	48%	54%	50%	51%	50%	55%	49%	52%	53%	49%	45%	100%	-	-
Grocery shopping is a shared responsibility	29%	27%	39%	28%	23%	30%	20%	31%	32%	29%	29%	32%	26%	29%	31%	30%	-	100%	-
Not responsible for grocery shopping	18%	39%	13%	14%	13%	21%	25%	18%	15%	19%	15%	19%	20%	17%	19%	22%	-	-	100%
DK/NA	1%	1%	-	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	*%	2%	1%	1%	4%	-	-	-

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q2C. WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR WHEN YOU ARE CHOOSING WHICH GROCERIES TO BUY? IS IT ... ?

	=====	GENDER		AGE					REGION							LANGUAGE				
		TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
Quality and taste	37%	39%	34%	35%	45%	38%	35%	32%	30%	38%	37%	32%	41%	37%	36%	43%	39%	36%	37%	39%
Health benefits	25%	22%	28%	31%	17%	22%	26%	30%	20%	27%	27%	18%	16%	29%	29%	20%	30%	23%	28%	32%
Price	23%	22%	23%	24%	25%	24%	22%	21%	23%	15%	24%	37%	30%	20%	12%	23%	15%	27%	17%	14%
Sales and promotions	7%	8%	7%	7%	9%	8%	7%	5%	17%	13%	5%	4%	4%	3%	16%	4%	1%	6%	13%	4%
Brand name	4%	3%	4%	2%	1%	5%	5%	6%	7%	5%	2%	5%	6%	4%	4%	5%	8%	4%	4%	3%
DK/NA	4%	5%	3%	1%	3%	4%	6%	6%	2%	3%	5%	4%	3%	6%	3%	5%	6%	4%	2%	8%

Q2C. WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR WHEN YOU ARE CHOOSING WHICH GROCERIES TO BUY? IS IT ... ?

	=====	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION				EMPLOYMENT STATUS							FAMILY INCOME					
		TOTAL	Adlts only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Stu-dent	Re-tired	Unemp-loyed	TOTAL Emp-loyed	Emp. Full-time	Emp. Part-time	Self Emp-loyed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
Quality and taste	37%	36%	37%	34%	36%	29%	28%	35%	32%	39%	39%	39%	39%	22%	32%	36%	47%	57%
Health benefits	25%	26%	25%	24%	27%	22%	34%	25%	20%	25%	23%	20%	36%	26%	24%	20%	20%	19%
Price	23%	22%	24%	26%	21%	18%	26%	20%	34%	23%	25%	28%	11%	37%	28%	22%	23%	9%
Sales and promotions	7%	7%	8%	8%	10%	19%	8%	7%	9%	6%	8%	5%	1%	9%	9%	12%	6%	6%
Brand name	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	7%	-	5%	2%	4%	2%	6%	8%	2%	4%	6%	3%	5%
DK/NA	4%	4%	3%	4%	2%	5%	4%	7%	4%	3%	3%	1%	5%	4%	2%	4%	1%	4%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q2C. WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR WHEN YOU ARE CHOOSING WHICH GROCERIES TO BUY? IS IT ... ?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col l / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K- 1 Mil.	5K- 100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
Quality and taste	37%	35%	42%	35%	33%	17%	38%	38%	42%	41%	36%	35%	28%	36%	37%	39%	33%	44%	37%
Health benefits	25%	31%	18%	26%	28%	27%	24%	22%	29%	24%	28%	26%	22%	23%	28%	32%	26%	25%	23%
Price	23%	24%	24%	23%	21%	34%	15%	28%	16%	19%	23%	26%	31%	27%	17%	14%	28%	18%	17%
Sales and promotions	7%	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%	12%	7%	4%	7%	8%	5%	13%	6%	13%	4%	6%	7%	9%
Brand name	4%	2%	3%	4%	5%	5%	6%	3%	4%	5%	2%	3%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%
DK/NA	4%	1%	4%	5%	6%	9%	5%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	2%	4%	2%	8%	3%	3%	9%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q3C. WHEN YOU LEAVE A GROCERY STORE, WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU ALWAYS, USUALLY, SOMETIMES, RARELY OR NEVER FEEL LIKE YOU GOT GOOD VALUE FOR YOUR MONEY?

	GENDER		AGE					REGION									LANGUAGE			
	TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.	Other
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
TOP 2 BOX	57%	57%	57%	54%	53%	58%	57%	64%	50%	60%	57%	61%	50%	62%	62%	52%	68%	57%	60%	51%
Always	15%	16%	14%	11%	17%	16%	12%	22%	13%	18%	14%	16%	14%	16%	21%	17%	17%	14%	17%	16%
Usually	42%	41%	43%	43%	36%	43%	45%	42%	37%	42%	43%	45%	36%	46%	41%	34%	51%	43%	43%	35%
Sometimes	29%	28%	29%	32%	30%	30%	30%	22%	33%	28%	29%	22%	31%	26%	24%	32%	28%	28%	28%	31%
Rarely	8%	8%	8%	9%	13%	5%	7%	5%	9%	7%	9%	7%	8%	6%	8%	7%	1%	8%	7%	7%
Never	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%	7%	3%	2%	3%	9%	1%	3%	4%	-	3%	3%	5%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	11%	11%	11%	12%	17%	8%	9%	10%	16%	10%	11%	10%	16%	7%	11%	12%	1%	11%	10%	12%
DK/NA	3%	4%	3%	2%	*	4%	4%	5%	1%	2%	3%	7%	3%	5%	2%	5%	3%	3%	2%	7%

Q3C. WHEN YOU LEAVE A GROCERY STORE, WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU ALWAYS, USUALLY, SOMETIMES, RARELY OR NEVER FEEL LIKE YOU GOT GOOD VALUE FOR YOUR MONEY?

	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION					EMPLOYMENT STATUS							FAMILY INCOME					
	TOTAL	Adlts only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Student	Retired	Unemployed	TOTAL Employed	Emp. Full-time	Emp. Part-time	Self Employed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
TOP 2 BOX	57%	60%	54%	54%	58%	64%	62%	62%	48%	55%	53%	60%	59%	59%	57%	62%	60%	54%
Always	15%	16%	14%	14%	14%	11%	13%	20%	7%	13%	12%	11%	20%	19%	20%	16%	13%	2%
Usually	42%	44%	40%	40%	44%	53%	48%	42%	40%	42%	42%	49%	39%	40%	36%	46%	48%	51%
Sometimes	29%	26%	32%	33%	26%	27%	22%	26%	30%	30%	31%	33%	25%	30%	31%	29%	26%	30%
Rarely	8%	6%	9%	8%	11%	5%	14%	5%	8%	8%	9%	4%	10%	3%	6%	4%	10%	11%
Never	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%	5%	4%	2%	3%	4%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	11%	10%	12%	11%	15%	8%	17%	9%	12%	12%	12%	7%	15%	8%	10%	6%	13%	16%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

DK/NA 3% 4% 1% 1% 2% 1% - 4% 11% 2% 4% - *% 3% 2% 3% - 1%

Q3C. WHEN YOU LEAVE A GROCERY STORE, WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU ALWAYS, USUALLY, SOMETIMES, RARELY OR NEVER FEEL LIKE YOU GOT GOOD VALUE FOR YOUR MONEY?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col I / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K- 1 Mil.	5K- 100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
TOP 2 BOX	57%	54%	56%	57%	62%	53%	61%	54%	62%	57%	60%	58%	52%	57%	60%	51%	59%	60%	50%
Always	15%	11%	17%	13%	18%	25%	19%	15%	9%	18%	12%	12%	18%	14%	17%	16%	15%	17%	13%
Usually	42%	43%	38%	44%	44%	28%	41%	39%	53%	39%	48%	46%	34%	43%	43%	35%	44%	43%	37%
Sometimes	29%	32%	30%	28%	25%	28%	29%	30%	27%	29%	28%	26%	33%	28%	28%	31%	29%	29%	27%
Rarely	8%	9%	9%	7%	5%	5%	6%	11%	6%	6%	8%	10%	7%	8%	8%	7%	6%	8%	11%
Never	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	10%	1%	3%	4%	4%	1%	4%	5%	3%	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	11%	12%	13%	10%	9%	14%	7%	13%	10%	10%	9%	14%	12%	11%	10%	12%	10%	11%	15%
DK/NA	3%	2%	1%	5%	4%	5%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	7%	2%	1%	8%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q4C. WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO COMPARE THE PRICES OF SIMILAR FOOD PRODUCTS IN A GROCERY STORE, IS IT USUALLY VERY EASY, SOMEWHAT EASY, SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT OR VERY DIFFICULT TO FIGURE OUT WHICH IS THE BEST DEAL?

	GENDER		AGE					REGION									LANGUAGE			
	TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.	Other
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
TOP 2 BOX	73%	72%	74%	75%	83%	76%	70%	62%	76%	77%	75%	69%	66%	66%	78%	75%	63%	73%	79%	62%
Very easy	20%	19%	21%	18%	13%	26%	21%	20%	21%	8%	25%	26%	22%	23%	9%	26%	22%	25%	10%	13%
Somewhat easy	53%	53%	53%	56%	71%	50%	49%	42%	56%	69%	50%	43%	45%	43%	69%	49%	41%	48%	68%	49%
Somewhat difficult	20%	20%	20%	24%	11%	20%	21%	21%	21%	17%	17%	19%	25%	27%	16%	14%	32%	19%	17%	27%
Very difficult	4%	4%	4%	-	3%	2%	6%	10%	2%	2%	5%	4%	7%	5%	2%	4%	3%	5%	2%	6%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	24%	24%	24%	24%	15%	21%	27%	31%	23%	20%	21%	23%	32%	33%	17%	19%	34%	24%	19%	33%
DK/NA	3%	4%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	7%	*%	3%	4%	8%	1%	2%	5%	6%	2%	3%	3%	6%

Q4C. WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO COMPARE THE PRICES OF SIMILAR FOOD PRODUCTS IN A GROCERY STORE, IS IT USUALLY VERY EASY, SOMEWHAT EASY, SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT OR VERY DIFFICULT TO FIGURE OUT WHICH IS THE BEST DEAL?

	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION					EMPLOYMENT STATUS								FAMILY INCOME				
	TOTAL	Adults only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Student	Retired	Unemployed	TOTAL Employed	Emp. Full-time	Emp. Part-time	Self-employed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
TOP 2 BOX	73%	70%	78%	79%	75%	85%	78%	66%	66%	76%	77%	77%	71%	67%	77%	78%	74%	79%
Very easy	20%	21%	19%	20%	18%	9%	12%	21%	19%	21%	21%	23%	16%	23%	20%	25%	12%	24%
Somewhat easy	53%	49%	58%	59%	57%	76%	65%	45%	47%	55%	56%	53%	55%	44%	57%	53%	61%	55%
Somewhat difficult	20%	20%	19%	17%	21%	13%	19%	19%	25%	19%	17%	20%	23%	24%	19%	17%	19%	15%
Very difficult	4%	5%	2%	2%	3%	-	-	9%	*%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	1%	6%	3%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	24%	26%	21%	19%	24%	13%	19%	29%	25%	22%	20%	23%	26%	29%	21%	18%	25%	18%
DK/NA	3%	5%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	5%	8%	2%	2%	-	3%	4%	2%	4%	1%	2%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q4C. WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO COMPARE THE PRICES OF SIMILAR FOOD PRODUCTS IN A GROCERY STORE, IS IT USUALLY VERY EASY, SOMEWHAT EASY, SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT OR VERY DIFFICULT TO FIGURE OUT WHICH IS THE BEST DEAL?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col I / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K-1 Mil.	5K-100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
TOP 2 BOX	73%	75%	82%	70%	66%	63%	79%	73%	75%	73%	77%	74%	67%	73%	79%	62%	74%	79%	62%
Very easy	20%	18%	19%	22%	21%	16%	19%	22%	20%	20%	27%	16%	16%	25%	10%	13%	23%	18%	15%
Somewhat easy	53%	56%	63%	48%	45%	47%	60%	51%	54%	52%	51%	57%	51%	48%	68%	49%	51%	61%	47%
Somewhat di ffi cul t	20%	24%	14%	22%	19%	25%	13%	22%	19%	19%	17%	20%	24%	19%	17%	27%	19%	16%	27%
Very di ffi cul t	4%	-	2%	4%	10%	7%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%	5%	2%	6%	4%	3%	5%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	24%	24%	16%	26%	29%	32%	18%	25%	23%	23%	20%	25%	29%	24%	19%	33%	24%	19%	32%
DK/NA	3%	1%	2%	4%	6%	5%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	6%	3%	2%	6%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q5C. IN GROCERY STORES SOME PACKAGED OR CANNED PRODUCTS DISPLAY THE "UNIT PRICE" OF THE PRODUCT IN ADDITION TO THE SALE PRICE OF THE PRODUCT ON THE LABEL. THE "UNIT PRICE" IS THE PRICE PER UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, SUCH AS THE PRICE PER 100 MILLILITRES OR 100 MILLIGRAMS. HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THE UNIT PRICE ON THE LABEL OF ANY GROCERIES YOU HAVE BOUGHT?

	GENDER		AGE						REGION							LANGUAGE				
	TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.	Other
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
Yes	61%	60%	61%	54%	63%	62%	66%	56%	49%	56%	61%	65%	64%	70%	66%	63%	71%	62%	56%	60%
No	38%	38%	39%	45%	37%	38%	32%	41%	50%	43%	38%	34%	32%	30%	34%	35%	29%	37%	43%	39%
DK/NA	1%	2%	1%	1%	-	*%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	4%	1%	-	2%	-	1%	1%	1%

Q5C. IN GROCERY STORES SOME PACKAGED OR CANNED PRODUCTS DISPLAY THE "UNIT PRICE" OF THE PRODUCT IN ADDITION TO THE SALE PRICE OF THE PRODUCT ON THE LABEL. THE "UNIT PRICE" IS THE PRICE PER UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, SUCH AS THE PRICE PER 100 MILLILITRES OR 100 MILLIGRAMS. HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THE UNIT PRICE ON THE LABEL OF ANY GROCERIES YOU HAVE BOUGHT?

	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION					EMPLOYMENT STATUS								FAMILY INCOME				
	TOTAL	Adlts only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Stu-dent	Re-tired	Unemp-loyed	TOTAL Emp-loyed	Emp- Full-time	Emp- Part-time	Self Emp-loyed	Under \$25K	Under \$50K	Under \$80K	Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
Yes	61%	61%	60%	60%	55%	51%	55%	61%	59%	62%	59%	59%	75%	50%	63%	61%	66%	73%
No	38%	37%	39%	39%	44%	47%	45%	37%	37%	37%	40%	41%	25%	48%	37%	37%	34%	27%
DK/NA	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	-	2%	5%	*%	1%	-	1%	1%	*%	2%	-	-

Q5C. IN GROCERY STORES SOME PACKAGED OR CANNED PRODUCTS DISPLAY THE "UNIT PRICE" OF THE PRODUCT IN ADDITION TO THE SALE PRICE OF THE PRODUCT ON THE LABEL. THE "UNIT PRICE" IS THE PRICE PER UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, SUCH AS THE PRICE PER 100 MILLILITRES OR 100 MILLIGRAMS. HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THE UNIT PRICE ON THE LABEL OF ANY GROCERIES YOU HAVE BOUGHT?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	Col l / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad		Over 1 Mil.	100K- 1 Mil.	5K- 100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
Yes	61%	54%	61%	65%	59%	44%	42%	61%	77%	65%	62%	54%	58%	62%	56%	60%	64%	61%	50%
No	38%	45%	39%	33%	39%	54%	57%	38%	22%	33%	38%	45%	41%	37%	43%	39%	36%	38%	47%
DK/NA	1%	1%	-	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	*%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	*%	*%	3%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q6C. TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU READ AND MAKE USE OF THE "UNIT PRICE" ON THE LABEL WHEN YOU ARE DECIDING ON WHAT TO BUY IN A GROCERY STORE? DO YOU ALWAYS, USUALLY, SOMETIMES, RARELY OR NEVER USE IT?

	GENDER		AGE					REGION							LANGUAGE					
	TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.	Other
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
TOP 2 BOX	39%	42%	36%	33%	35%	45%	43%	36%	25%	35%	40%	46%	38%	48%	37%	40%	47%	40%	38%	36%
Always	17%	22%	12%	12%	15%	20%	20%	18%	9%	9%	21%	11%	16%	28%	11%	21%	24%	18%	13%	22%
Usually	22%	20%	24%	21%	20%	25%	24%	18%	16%	26%	19%	36%	22%	20%	27%	19%	23%	22%	26%	14%
Sometimes	27%	26%	27%	26%	30%	23%	28%	27%	30%	28%	23%	19%	28%	34%	31%	22%	33%	25%	28%	30%
Rarely	14%	12%	15%	15%	14%	13%	13%	14%	14%	15%	15%	16%	12%	7%	15%	15%	8%	13%	13%	20%
Never	19%	18%	19%	23%	20%	18%	14%	19%	26%	18%	21%	16%	20%	9%	14%	23%	9%	20%	18%	14%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	32%	30%	34%	39%	34%	31%	26%	33%	40%	33%	36%	33%	32%	16%	29%	37%	18%	33%	31%	34%
DK/NA	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	1%	2%	4%	5%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%

Q6C. TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU READ AND MAKE USE OF THE "UNIT PRICE" ON THE LABEL WHEN YOU ARE DECIDING ON WHAT TO BUY IN A GROCERY STORE? DO YOU ALWAYS, USUALLY, SOMETIMES, RARELY OR NEVER USE IT?

	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION					EMPLOYMENT STATUS							FAMILY INCOME					
	TOTAL	Adlts only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Student	Retired	Unemployed	TOTAL Employed	Emp. Full-time	Emp. Part-time	Self Employed	Under \$25K	Under \$50K	Under \$80K	Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
TOP 2 BOX	39%	39%	39%	40%	35%	44%	29%	37%	40%	40%	36%	43%	51%	40%	38%	36%	44%	45%
Always	17%	19%	15%	16%	15%	7%	13%	17%	17%	17%	15%	18%	26%	14%	15%	13%	20%	20%
Usually	22%	21%	23%	23%	20%	37%	16%	19%	23%	22%	21%	25%	24%	26%	24%	23%	24%	25%
Sometimes	27%	29%	24%	22%	23%	29%	28%	31%	25%	25%	27%	25%	19%	25%	30%	27%	25%	25%
Rarely	14%	13%	14%	15%	15%	14%	23%	14%	12%	13%	13%	13%	14%	13%	18%	11%	13%	10%
Never	19%	16%	21%	20%	25%	13%	18%	15%	20%	21%	23%	17%	15%	21%	11%	24%	18%	20%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	32%	29%	36%	36%	40%	27%	41%	29%	31%	34%	36%	30%	30%	35%	28%	34%	31%	30%
DK/NA	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	-	3%	3%	4%	2%	1%	3%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	-

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q6C. TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU READ AND MAKE USE OF THE "UNIT PRICE" ON THE LABEL WHEN YOU ARE DECIDING ON WHAT TO BUY IN A GROCERY STORE? DO YOU ALWAYS, USUALLY, SOMETIMES, RARELY OR NEVER USE IT?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col I / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K-1 Mil.	5K-100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
TOP 2 BOX	39%	33%	38%	45%	38%	34%	30%	37%	50%	39%	38%	38%	41%	40%	39%	36%	42%	39%	33%
Always	17%	12%	15%	22%	18%	13%	13%	16%	23%	18%	18%	16%	14%	18%	13%	22%	17%	17%	16%
Usually	22%	21%	23%	23%	20%	21%	18%	21%	26%	21%	20%	22%	27%	22%	26%	14%	24%	22%	17%
Sometimes	27%	26%	28%	26%	27%	23%	27%	27%	25%	28%	27%	24%	25%	25%	28%	30%	25%	28%	26%
Rarely	14%	15%	14%	12%	14%	13%	13%	15%	12%	13%	15%	13%	16%	13%	13%	20%	13%	16%	13%
Never	19%	23%	20%	15%	18%	26%	26%	18%	12%	18%	19%	22%	13%	20%	18%	14%	18%	17%	24%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	32%	39%	33%	27%	32%	39%	39%	34%	24%	31%	34%	35%	29%	33%	31%	34%	31%	32%	36%
DK/NA	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	5%	2%	3%	*%	2%	1%	4%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q7C. HOW CLEAR AND EASY TO FIND IS THE UNIT PRICE ON MOST GROCERIES? IS IT VERY, SOMEWHAT, NOT VERY OR NOT AT ALL CLEAR AND EASY TO FIND?

	=====	GENDER		AGE					REGION							LANGUAGE				
		TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
TOP 2 BOX	70%	69%	71%	70%	71%	75%	70%	65%	66%	68%	72%	66%	66%	77%	68%	77%	80%	72%	69%	66%
Very clear	22%	25%	20%	19%	26%	22%	21%	24%	28%	14%	26%	18%	23%	26%	13%	31%	25%	24%	17%	23%
Somewhat clear	48%	44%	51%	51%	45%	53%	49%	40%	38%	54%	46%	48%	43%	51%	55%	46%	56%	47%	51%	43%
Not very clear	15%	17%	13%	16%	19%	13%	13%	15%	19%	19%	12%	14%	19%	11%	23%	7%	9%	12%	18%	22%
Not at all clear	9%	9%	10%	11%	8%	7%	11%	11%	9%	8%	10%	10%	13%	8%	5%	8%	7%	11%	8%	8%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	24%	26%	23%	26%	28%	20%	24%	25%	28%	27%	22%	24%	32%	19%	28%	14%	16%	23%	26%	30%
DK/NA	5%	5%	6%	3%	2%	5%	6%	10%	6%	5%	6%	10%	2%	4%	4%	8%	4%	5%	5%	4%

OPTION CONSOMMATEURS: ATTITUDES TOWARDS UNIT PRICING - DEC. 2009 (PN6559)

Q7C. HOW CLEAR AND EASY TO FIND IS THE UNIT PRICE ON MOST GROCERIES? IS IT VERY, SOMEWHAT, NOT VERY OR NOT AT ALL CLEAR AND EASY TO FIND?

	=====	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION				EMPLOYMENT STATUS							FAMILY INCOME					
		TOTAL	Adl ts only	Any kids	Ki ds 0-17	Ki ds 18+	Home-maker	Stu- dent	Re- tired	Unemp loyed	TOTAL Emp- loyed	Emp- Full- time	Emp. Part- time	Self Emp- loyed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
TOP 2 BOX	70%	67%	74%	76%	68%	77%	67%	68%	78%	70%	69%	73%	71%	70%	69%	62%	75%	79%
Very clear	22%	23%	21%	24%	20%	32%	15%	23%	30%	21%	20%	21%	26%	30%	20%	21%	23%	23%
Somewhat clear	48%	44%	53%	53%	48%	45%	52%	45%	48%	49%	49%	52%	45%	40%	49%	41%	51%	56%
Not very clear	15%	15%	15%	15%	21%	16%	16%	16%	11%	15%	16%	8%	17%	16%	19%	18%	13%	11%
Not at all clear	9%	12%	6%	6%	7%	2%	11%	9%	8%	10%	9%	16%	9%	10%	7%	13%	9%	9%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	24%	27%	22%	21%	27%	18%	27%	25%	19%	25%	25%	24%	26%	27%	26%	31%	22%	20%
DK/NA	5%	6%	4%	3%	5%	5%	6%	7%	3%	5%	6%	2%	4%	3%	5%	7%	3%	1%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q7C. HOW CLEAR AND EASY TO FIND IS THE UNIT PRICE ON MOST GROCERIES? IS IT VERY, SOMEWHAT, NOT VERY OR NOT AT ALL CLEAR AND EASY TO FIND?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col l / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K-1 Mil.	5K-100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
TOP 2 BOX	70%	70%	71%	74%	65%	65%	66%	71%	74%	73%	69%	67%	71%	72%	69%	66%	71%	71%	67%
Very clear	22%	19%	23%	23%	24%	22%	21%	22%	24%	24%	25%	20%	19%	24%	17%	23%	23%	21%	23%
Somewhat clear	48%	51%	48%	52%	40%	43%	45%	49%	50%	50%	44%	46%	52%	47%	52%	43%	49%	50%	44%
Not very clear	15%	16%	18%	11%	16%	20%	14%	15%	13%	14%	16%	14%	19%	12%	18%	22%	15%	16%	13%
Not at all clear	9%	11%	8%	10%	10%	9%	13%	9%	8%	7%	9%	14%	7%	11%	8%	8%	9%	8%	13%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	24%	26%	25%	21%	26%	29%	27%	24%	22%	21%	25%	28%	26%	23%	26%	30%	24%	24%	26%
DK/NA	5%	3%	3%	5%	10%	7%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%	5%	3%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	7%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q8C. DO YOU STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT GROCERY STORES OUGHT TO BE LEGALLY OBLIGED TO SHOW THE UNIT PRICE OF ALL FOODS THEY SELL?

	GENDER		AGE					REGION									LANGUAGE			
	TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.	Other
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
TOP 2 BOX	86%	87%	85%	80%	88%	89%	87%	86%	91%	85%	87%	74%	89%	87%	85%	86%	87%	85%	86%	88%
Strongly agree	51%	54%	48%	38%	49%	52%	56%	58%	58%	41%	57%	39%	49%	55%	45%	56%	52%	54%	40%	58%
Somewhat agree	35%	33%	38%	43%	39%	38%	30%	29%	33%	44%	30%	35%	40%	32%	40%	30%	35%	32%	46%	31%
Somewhat disagree	7%	6%	8%	10%	7%	6%	7%	5%	6%	7%	7%	17%	3%	6%	8%	6%	5%	8%	6%	2%
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%	2%	2%	4%	1%	4%	2%	6%	3%	4%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	10%	10%	11%	15%	10%	8%	10%	9%	7%	11%	9%	23%	6%	10%	12%	8%	10%	11%	10%	6%
DK/NA	4%	3%	4%	5%	2%	3%	4%	5%	2%	4%	4%	3%	5%	2%	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%	6%

Q8C. DO YOU STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT GROCERY STORES OUGHT TO BE LEGALLY OBLIGED TO SHOW THE UNIT PRICE OF ALL FOODS THEY SELL?

	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION					EMPLOYMENT STATUS								FAMILY INCOME				
	TOTAL	Adlts only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Student	Retired	Unemployed	TOTAL Employed	Emp. Full-time	Emp. Part-time	Self-employed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
TOP 2 BOX	86%	86%	87%	88%	82%	90%	74%	88%	94%	87%	85%	93%	88%	89%	85%	84%	88%	87%
Strongly agree	51%	55%	46%	46%	45%	51%	30%	58%	54%	49%	46%	50%	61%	51%	51%	49%	49%	54%
Somewhat agree	35%	31%	41%	42%	37%	39%	44%	29%	41%	37%	39%	43%	27%	38%	35%	36%	39%	33%
Somewhat disagree	7%	8%	6%	6%	6%	2%	11%	4%	5%	8%	10%	4%	5%	4%	8%	10%	6%	6%
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	-	7%	4%	-	3%	2%	1%	6%	1%	5%	3%	4%	5%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	10%	11%	9%	8%	10%	2%	18%	9%	5%	11%	12%	5%	11%	5%	13%	13%	9%	11%
DK/NA	4%	3%	4%	3%	8%	8%	8%	4%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	6%	1%	3%	3%	2%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q8C. DO YOU STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT GROCERY STORES OUGHT TO BE LEGALLY OBLIGED TO SHOW THE UNIT PRICE OF ALL FOODS THEY SELL?

	AGE				EDUCATION				COMMUNITY SIZE				LANGUAGE			RESPONSIBILITY FOR GROCERY SHOPPING			
	TOTAL	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Less Than HS	HS	Col I / Some Uni v.	Uni v. Grad	Over 1 Mil.	100K-1 Mil.	5K-100K	Under 5K	Eng lish	French	Other	Own. Resp.	Shared Resp.	No Resp.
TOTAL	1001	198	277	286	240	102	166	429	285	410	197	266	128	641	257	116	510	295	185
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	88	217	346	350	117	165	405	290	351	203	281	166	650	264	103	541	283	166
TOP 2 BOX	86%	80%	89%	87%	87%	84%	81%	88%	88%	86%	86%	85%	88%	85%	87%	88%	86%	86%	86%
Strongly agree	51%	38%	50%	54%	59%	54%	43%	53%	53%	52%	51%	49%	51%	54%	40%	58%	51%	47%	54%
Somewhat agree	35%	43%	39%	34%	28%	30%	38%	35%	35%	34%	35%	36%	37%	32%	46%	31%	35%	39%	32%
Somewhat di sagree	7%	10%	7%	7%	5%	6%	8%	7%	7%	6%	10%	7%	5%	8%	6%	2%	7%	8%	6%
Strongly di sagree	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%	1%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%
BOTTOM 2 BOX	10%	15%	9%	9%	9%	6%	12%	10%	10%	9%	13%	11%	8%	11%	10%	6%	10%	11%	8%
DK/NA	4%	5%	2%	4%	4%	10%	7%	2%	2%	5%	1%	4%	4%	3%	4%	6%	3%	3%	6%

Unit pricing: An effective tool?

Q9C. IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU GET THE BEST VALUE FOR MONEY WHEN YOU BUY YOUR GROCERIES? IS IT BY ... ?

	=====	GENDER		AGE					REGION							LANGUAGE				
		TOTAL	M	F	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Mon. CMA	Tor. CMA	Van. CMA	Eng.	Fre.
TOTAL	1001	484	517	198	168	212	241	181	74	244	383	65	102	133	117	161	69	641	256	116
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	501	500	88	130	206	319	258	125	251	250	125	125	125	115	98	62	650	263	103
Buying products that are on sale	39%	36%	43%	46%	37%	41%	35%	38%	46%	27%	46%	43%	44%	33%	31%	36%	29%	44%	28%	41%
Buying cheaper house brands	16%	16%	16%	17%	19%	18%	11%	15%	22%	31%	9%	14%	14%	7%	27%	12%	7%	12%	30%	7%
Comparing the unit price of products	40%	44%	36%	35%	42%	39%	47%	36%	26%	38%	41%	36%	39%	54%	39%	46%	59%	39%	38%	52%
DK/NA	5%	4%	5%	2%	2%	3%	6%	11%	6%	3%	5%	7%	3%	6%	4%	6%	5%	5%	4%	*%

Q9C. IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU GET THE BEST VALUE FOR MONEY WHEN YOU BUY YOUR GROCERIES? IS IT BY ... ?

	=====	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION				EMPLOYMENT STATUS							FAMILY INCOME					
		Adlts only	Any kids	Kids 0-17	Kids 18+	Home-maker	Stu- dent	Re- tired	Unemp- loyed	TOTAL Emp- loyed	Emp. Full- time	Emp. Part- time	Self- Emp- loyed	Under \$25K	\$25K Under \$50K	\$50K Under \$80K	\$80K Under \$120K	Over \$120K
TOTAL	1001	524	457	349	199	40	63	226	53	588	394	92	102	120	208	172	156	100
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1001	613	368	284	149	40	31	315	49	541	367	75	99	125	216	182	149	92
Buying products that are on sale	39%	36%	43%	43%	45%	43%	35%	35%	49%	40%	41%	43%	37%	49%	39%	39%	37%	40%
Buying cheaper house brands	16%	15%	17%	18%	16%	18%	14%	13%	28%	15%	16%	16%	15%	22%	17%	18%	19%	9%
Comparing the unit price of products	40%	42%	38%	37%	37%	37%	45%	43%	20%	41%	40%	37%	46%	24%	40%	40%	41%	49%
DK/NA	5%	7%	2%	1%	2%	2%	6%	9%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	5%	4%	3%	2%	2%

Appendix 2: List of retail stores visited during the study

	Retailer	Adress	Region	Date of visit
1	Sobeys/Price Choppers	1887 St Joseph Boulevard	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
2	Sobeys/Price Choppers	320 McArthur Avenue	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
3	Quickie	490 Rideau Street	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
4	Loblaws	363 Rideau St	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
5	Métro	245 Rideau Street	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
6	Rexall/Pharma Plus	200 Rideau st	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
7	Mac's Convenience Store	210 Laurier Avenue East	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
8	Shopper's Drug Mart	702 Bank Street	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
9	Loblaws	64 Isabella Street,	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
10	Métro	754 Bank Street	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
11	Walmart	450 Terminal Avenue,	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
12	Costco	1900 Cyrville Rd Gloucester	Ottawa	Feb. 5, 2010
13	Foodland	11 Thorold	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
14	Métro	1400 Vincent Massey Drive	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
15	Walmart	960 Brookdale Avenue	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
16	Shopper's Drug Mart	975 Brookdale Avenue	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
17	Jean Coutu	59th Street East	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
18	Loblaws/Your Independant Grocers	31 Ninth Street E	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
19	Mac's Convenience Store	1292 Pitt Street	Cornwall	Feb. 5, 2010
20	Costco	1015 rue du Marche Central	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
21	Métro /Super C	8200 boul. Pie IX	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
22	Couche Tard	8299 Rue Saint-Denis	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
23	Jean Coutu	7145 St Denis	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
24	Shopper's Drug Mart/Pharmaprix	6897 St-Denis	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
25	Sobeys/IGA	900 Rue Saint-Zotique Est	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
26	Couche Tard	6430 rue Saint-Denis	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
27	Loblaws/Maxi	2535 rue Masson	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
28	Métro	2008 Rue Gauthier	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
29	Sobeys/IGA	2600, Rue Ontario Est,	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
30	Loblaws/Provigo	2925 Sherbrooke E	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
31	Walmart	7445 Boulevard Langelier	Montreal	Feb. 12, 2010
32	Walmart	155 Montee Masson	Rawdon (Mascouche)	Feb. 13, 2010
33	Shopper's Drug Mart/Pharmaprix	805 Montee Masson	Rawdon (Mascouche)	Feb. 13, 2010
34	Loblaws/Maxi	3399 Rue Queen	Rawdon	Feb. 13, 2010
35	Sobeys/IGA	3450 Rue Queen	Rawdon	Feb. 13, 2010
36	Métro	3528 rue Metcalfe	Rawdon	Feb. 13, 2010
37	Jean Coutu	3285 1 Av Rawdon	Rawdon	Feb. 13, 2010

